A CONCISE HISTORY OF SOUTH INDIA

ISSUES AND INTERPRETATIONS

edited by
NOBORU KARASHIMA

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Preface

NOBORU KARASHIMA

In 1955, Nilakanta Sastri's excellent book on south Indian history, *A History of South India*, was published. Sastri, a professor at the University of Madras, contributed greatly to the establishment and development of south Indian historical study. As a Brahmin, however, his inclination was to emphasize the role of north Indian and Sanskrit culture in the development of south Indian society. This, I believe, is a blemish in his work. The book also left out the modern and contemporary periods, dealing only with the ancient and medieval periods up to the fall of the Vijayanagar state. Nevertheless, his examination of the sources of south Indian history, including the corpus of inscriptions, is thoroughgoing and meticulous, and his argument is always prudent except occasionally when affected by the bias mentioned above. On the whole, therefore, it is an excellent book and nobody can quite match Sastri in bringing out another such work.[1]

For other reasons also, it must have been very difficult for historians since then to write a new book on the same topic. During the 1960s, the Dravidian movement in south India, which was actually the manifestation of Tamil nationalism, became mainstream not only in the political but also in the academic field. Therefore, any writing that the Tamil nationalists did not like, they attacked severely even if its content was academically acceptable. As a result, no historian took up this challenge, despite much advancement in the study of south Indian history since 1955, and particularly after 1980.

Another reason that historians may have found it difficult to write such a book must have come from a change in the concept of history. Until the 1950s, the style of history writing in India was what had long been practised in Europe, its main focus being political history illustrated by change of rulers, although after Independence, people were attracted to Marxist historical writing. During the 1960s and after, new trends appeared in history writing. In Europe, the influence of the Annales School gained ground, attracting scholars' attention to deep structure or long-term factors, and in India, the Subaltern studies started highlighting the role of the ruled instead of the rulers. After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1993, Marxist ideas lost their charm. In the midst of the academic storm of post-modernism towards the end of the century, the so-called linguistic turn severely damaged history writing (Clark 2004), and Jean-Francois Lyotard sounded the death knell for 'grand narratives' (Lyotard 1984), making the writing of a general history more difficult.

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[1] Recognizing the importance of this book, the Oxford University Press in India has reprinted it in a revised form with an introduction by R. Champakalakshmi and an epilogue by Rajan Gurukkal (Sastri 2009).

Even if confronted with such difficulties, we cannot stop writing history. In China there is a proverb that goes, 'By investigating the old, we shall be able to know about the new'. Interpretation of the past, which is the task of historians, is important for the present and the future of our society. Therefore, considering the aforementioned situation and the fact that there have been many heated controversies these last forty years on various points of south Indian history, I will take up in this book certain issues in the long course of south Indian history and present to readers the interpretations historians can offer on these points of our past. For the convenience of readers, however, a conventional description of the political history of each period is also provided. These will be found in the first section of most of the chapters assigned to certain periods.

Since the publication of Sastri's book, many new archaeological discoveries have been made and new theories and interpretations presented. Some of these have been surrounded by controversies while others have not; despite this, I have tried to cover in this book all such points to acquaint the readers with the present state of study in south Indian history. More importantly, I have also included both modern and contemporary history, periods that Sastri's book does not cover. This, however, has made the scope of this work ambitious and it would have been impossible for me, a single person, to write this book. I have asked and received generous help from Y. Subbarayalu and P. Shanmugam, with whom I have been working on south Indian pre-modern history for a long time, and from Tsukasa Mizushima and others who were my students at the University of Tokyo and have specialized in south Indian modern and contemporary history. Other scholars who are my friends, Haruka Yanagisawa, Parvathi Menon, Hiroshi Yamashita, and Mahalakshmi Rakesh, have also helped by contributing sections. I owe much to all these scholars, particularly Subbarayalu and Mizushima, who helped me with the editorial work as well. Subbarayalu has made thirteen fresh maps and the chronological tables of dynastic rulers for this volume. I am grateful to him.

Periodization of Indian history is a problem (Singh 2011: 1). Even in the case of the most commonly adopted periodization, which divides history into ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary periods, there are still differences of opinion among scholars about characterizing and demarcating each period. In this book, I have divided south Indian history into several periods characterized by distinctive political, socio-economic, or cultural features, each comprising one to several centuries. Each chapter in this book is composed of such periods.

To place south India in context, its extent, if we were to define it geographically, is the area south of the Vindhyas up to the southern tip of the Indian peninsula, which was called Dakshinapada in Sanskrit literature. This includes parts of the states of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha. However, if we were to define it linguistically, it is composed of the five states where the Dravidian languages are spoken, namely Karnataka, Telangana,[2] Andhra

---

[2] Telangana was established as the 29th state in India on 2 June 2014 after separation from Andhra Pradesh. Although this bifurcation is shown in the frontispiece map, it was too late to reflect the change in the text. Therefore, the term Andhra Pradesh in the following chapters should be taken for the Andhra Pradesh which existed from 1956 to the above date of its bifurcation. For this change please see section 8.2.1.

Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala. These five Dravidian states show cultural features that are distinct when compared to the area where Aryan languages are spoken. However, the remaining part adjacent to the Vindhyas, where Aryan languages are spoken, also contributed greatly to the creation of south Indian characteristics in the long course of history.

But then again, south India is not a solid and congenial unit, even if it is defined narrowly as the area where Dravidian languages are now spoken. It is composed of people belonging to different language groups and local traditions. We will notice differences, for example, between the Tamil people and the Kannada and Telugu peoples in their feeling towards north Indian or the so-called Aryan culture.[3] Besides, there also exists, naturally, social and class differences among the people of south India. Among historians, of course, there are differences according to their standpoints in research.

Therefore, it is impossible that a history book such as this will satisfy all its readers. On the contrary, it is certain that this book will raise a volume of criticism that will revive old controversies or lead to new ones. However, I look forward to and welcome all criticism as a healthy sign, as it will advance the study of south Indian history. If this book becomes a spur to the publication of more books on south Indian history, I shall be extremely happy.

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[3] For this difference, see section 8.2.1.

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Note on Abbreviations, Diacritical Marks, Spellings, and Bibliographies

Abbreviations are used for some place names (districts) and publications (classics, journals, and series).

Districts (districts as they existed in 1972, used mostly for epigraphical reference): Cg = Chingleput/Chengalpattu, NA = North Arcot, Pd = Pudukkottai, SA = South Arcot, Tj = Tanjavur/Thanjavur, Tp = Tiruchirappalli

Publications: PP = Periyapurāṇam, ARE = Annual Report on (South Indian) Epigraphy (Madras/Delhi, 1887–), *CII = Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* (Ootacamund/Delhi, 1877–), *EC = Epigraphia Carnatica* (Bangalore, 1894–1955; New Series, Mysore, 1972–), *EI = Epigraphia Indica* (Calcutta/Delhi, 1892–), *NI = A Collection of the Inscriptions on Copper-Plates and Stones in the Nellore District* (Madras, 1905), *SII = South Indian Inscriptions* (Madras/Delhi, 1890–), *SITI = South Indian Temple Inscriptions* (Madras, 1953–7), *TAS = Travancore Archaeological Series* (Madras/Trivandrum, 1910–41), *TASSI = Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India* (Madras, 1955–1969), *TPLCP = Thirty Pallava Copper-Plates* (Madras, 1966), *TVNI = Tiruvannamalai: A Saiva Sacred Complex of South India*, vol. 1 (Pondicherry, 1990), *WI = Women of India* (New Delhi, 1957–)

Diacritical marks (in the form commonly used) are put to (*a*) the italicized terms in Dravidian, Sanskrit, and Prakrit languages (mostly terms of the premodern period or those relating to traditional society and culture, though some Persian-origin terms are also included), (*b*) most of the premodern publications such as *Akanānūṟu* and *Arthaśāstra*, and (*c*) some select personal names (mostly ancient rulers not appearing in the Chronological List of Dynastic Rulers.

As this is an edited publication of papers of many authors, there is no strict consistency in the way of putting diacritical marks throughout the book.

Spellings: If there are different spellings (mostly of place names), they are indicated in the index. For romanizing Chinese letters, the Pinyin system is used and when necessary the corresponding spelling in the Wade-Giles system is given in parentheses.

Bibliographies for further study of particular issues are given at the end of each chapter in section(subsection)-wise arrangement.

PROLOGUE

Dravidians

Immigrant or Indigenous?

NOBORU KARASHIMA

LANGUAGE FAMILIES OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

The four major languages spoken in south India, namely Telugu in Andhra Pradesh, Kannada in Karnataka, Tamil in Tamil Nadu, and Malayalam in Kerala, and others including Toda in the Nilgiris, Kodagu in Coorg, and Tulu in Mangalore, are languages that belong to the Dravidian family.[1] We can trace some of these languages in south India with certainty to the first millennium BCE, around the dawn of south Indian history and, therefore, before starting our narration of south Indian history we have to ask when and how the Dravidian people began to settle in south India.

On the Indian subcontinent we find four distinctive language families, namely the Indo-Aryan, the Dravidian, the Tibeto-Burman (Sino-Tibetan), and the Austro-Asiatic language families. As for the origin of the Indo-Aryan group, theories subscribing to the Indo-Aryan people's migration to the Indian subcontinent from outside have long been prevalent, but recently some scholars have raised controversies by strongly opposing this contention. Here, we shall discuss the spread of the other three groups first, making the examination of the Indo-Aryan issue later.

The languages of the Austro-Asiatic group in India, called Munda, which are closely related to those of the same group in Southeast Asia,[2] are found today mainly in the hilly areas of Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal, but in the remote past they seem to have been spread over a wider area as suggested by some extant place names in north India and by the evidence of certain Munda words in the *Rig-veda*.[3] Languages of the Tibeto-Burman group, which have affinity with Tibetan, Burmese, and

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[1] In 1816, F. W. Ellis first expressed the idea that some of the languages spoken in south India belonged to a language family different from that to which Sanskrit and many north Indian languages belonged. Forty years later this thesis was confirmed by Robert Caldwell (Caldwell 1856).

[2] They include the Mon, Khmer, and Vietnamese languages. The Khasis in Meghalaya and the Nicobarese in the Nicobar Islands are classified in this Southeast Asian group.

[3] There is a controversy, however, regarding the remaining Munda words in the *Rig-veda* (Anderson 2008).

Chinese languages, are at present found in the southern foothills of the Himalayan range and in the Assam hills, though the people of this group seem to have advanced to the Ganges valley forming clan states in the first millennium BCE.[4] The coming of these two groups, the Austro-Asiatic and the Tibeto-Burman, if they had come from outside, is thought to be in the remote past, bringing many important cultural elements into the Indian subcontinent, such as rice cultivation and non-Aryan religious thoughts.

The people of the Dravidian group have long been considered by linguists to have migrated to the Indian subcontinent from outside through Afghanistan in the fourth millennium BCE, though the question 'from where' has remained unanswered and has been controversial. As the Dravidian language is classified as agglutinative, some scholars have suggested links with the Altaic languages, which also have agglutinative morphological features.[5] So far, however, no scholar has succeeded in proving the relation of these two groups (Krishnamurti 2003: 43–5). Another more promising candidate is Elamite, an ancient language spoken in Iran. D.W. McAlpin has suggested its affinity with Dravidian and has been working on that premise (McAlpin 1981). Though it still remains a suggestion, some scholars argue on the basis of this hypothesis that the Dravidians migrated from Iran to the Indian subcontinent.

Contrary to the thesis that the Dravidians came from outside, Dravidian linguist Bh. Krishnamurti suggested recently the possibility of the Dravidians originating in the Indian subcontinent (Krishnamurti 2003). He classified the 26 Dravidian languages discovered so far into four groups, namely North Dravidian represented by Kurux and Malto, Central Dravidian by Kolami and Naiki, South Dravidian I by Tamil and Kannada, and South Dravidian II by Telugu. Without specifying the original location of the Dravidians in the Indian subcontinent, he suggests that in the third millennium BCE they scattered widely over it, even as far as Afghanistan. Accordingly, he does not deny the possibility of their having been the people of the Indus civilization[6] and suggests tentatively the following scenario for the development and movement of the groups classified above.

Given that proto-Dravidians had been the Indus people, they, who were at a certain stage of language development, encountered the Rig-vedic Aryans coming from the west around 1500 BCE after the decline of the Indus civilization.[7] Some of them were assimilated into Aryan society, but others were slowly pushed towards the periphery of the Gangetic plain and moved to the east and the south by the end of the second millennium BCE. They formed the Central and South Dravidian groups. In the course of this movement, South Dravidian split into South Dravidian I and South Dravidian II sometime around the eleventh century BCE.

More recently, another scholar, F. C. Southworth, has also asserted that the Dravidians originated in the Indian subcontinent.[8] Specifically, he sites the proto-Dravidian of the early third millennium BCE in the lower Godavari basin, on the grounds that all the three Dravidian sub-groups are found in eastern central India (Southworth 2005: 243).[9] As a specialist in linguistic palaeontology, he further suggests by analysing the terms of flora, fauna, and material culture in proto-Dravidian that the proto-Dravidian speakers were associated with the southern Neolithic complex that evolved in the mid-third millennium BCE in the Krishna–Tungabhadra basin. Although he more or less follows Krishnamurti in the chronological scheme of the development of Dravidian sub-groups (Southworth 2009: 110), the direction of the movement of those groups, he suggests, is just the opposite of that mooted by Krishnamurti, as he locates the original site of proto-Dravidian in the south. He supposes, therefore, that the contact of the Dravidians with the Indo-Aryans happened much later than the period of the Indus civilization, though he does not preclude the possibility that speakers of an earlier stage of Dravidian entered the subcontinent from western or central Asia (Southworth 2005: 244).

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[4] The people who formed *gana-sangha* states in the middle and lower Ganges valley in the middle of the first millennium BCE, including the Lichchavis and the Sakyas, seem to have originally belonged to the Tibeto-Burman language group, though they were Aryanized and some of them claimed to be Aryans.

[5] The suggestion of such a possibility was first made by Caldwell in 1856 (Caldwell 1856).

[6] These days the period of the Indus civilization is thought to be approximately from 2600 to 1900 BCE (Kenoyer 1998: 25).

[7] According to Witzel, the Indo-Aryans arrived in the Punjab at a time when the Indus civilization was already in decline and was disintegrating into local village culture (Witzel 1995: 114) and the earliest Rig-vedic literature of the Indo-Aryans does not contain Dravidian loans (Witzel 1999).

At present, however, all these interpretations remain only hypothetical and, as probably surmised from the foregoing, the problem of the original siting of the Dravidians concerns the question 'who built the Indus civilization?' and also the question of the origin of the Indo-Aryans. Next, therefore, we shall discuss the Indus civilization and Indo-Aryan issues.

THE INDUS CIVILIZATION AND THE ARYANS

More than 5,000 steatite seals and other objects that bear the so-called Indus script come from Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa, and other Indus civilization sites (see Map P.1). The study of these scripts started in the 1920s immediately after the discovery of many seals in the excavation of Mohenjo-Daro, but none of the scholars who studied them have succeeded in providing a universally acceptable decipherment, notwithstanding their use of various methods and hypotheses. Some scholars tried to decipher them by assuming the language written in those scripts was Indo-Aryan, while others regarded the language as Dravidian or Sumerian and applied various methods of investigation (Parpola 1994: 57–61).

In the 1960s, however, the use of the computer by Russian (Soviet) and Finnish scholars opened up a new dimension in the study. The Russian scholars examined the behaviour of the scripts in seals and other objects by using computers and suggested that the language written in those scripts had the grammatical features of Dravidian, though the conclusion of their analysis remains hypothetical. Concordances of the scripts were also made using computers, which advanced the study greatly. Asko Parpola, leader of the Finnish scholars working on the Indus script, compiled concordances using computers[10] and also made photographic lists of the Indus seals and inscriptions (Joshi and Parpola 1987; Mustafa Shah and Parpola 1991), both of which have great importance for the advancement of the study of the so-called Indus script. He has

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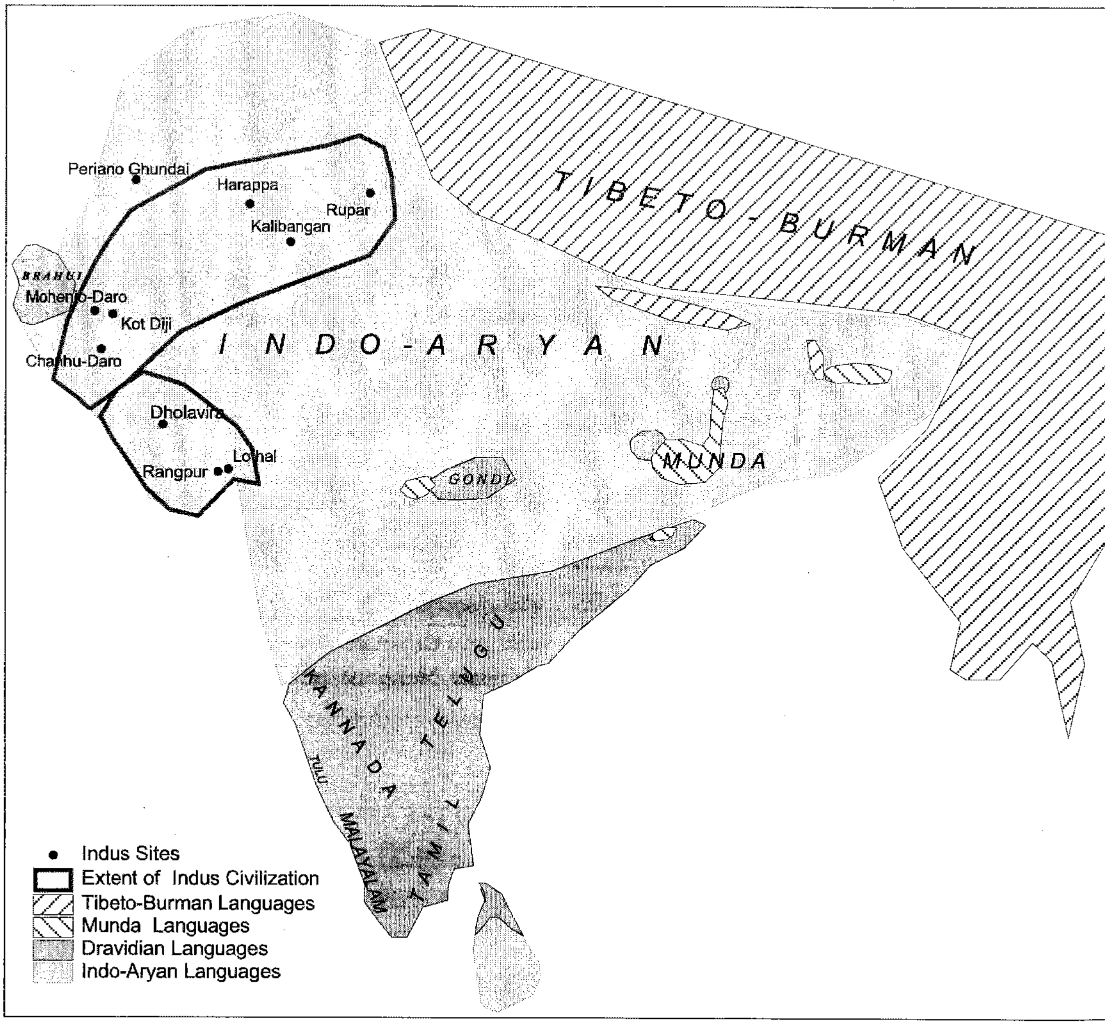
[8] However, he does not categorically rule out the possibility of a Dravidian connection with Elamite or other language groups (Southworth 2005: 255).

[9] To divide Dravidian languages into groups he follows Krishnamurti's classification mentioned earlier.

[10] Besides Finnish scholars, an Indian scholar, I. Mahadevan, also made a concordance using computers (Mahadevan 1977).


Periano Ghundai
Harappa
Rupar
Kalibangan
BRAHUI
Mohenjo-Daro
Kot Diji
Chanhu-Daro
Dholavira
Lothal
Rangpur
I N D O - A R Y A N
TIBETO - BURMAN
MUNDA
GONDI
KANNADA
TELUGU
TULU
MALAYALAM
TAMIL
● Indus Sites
Extent of Indus Civilization
Tibeto-Burman Languages
Munda Languages
Dravidian Languages
Indo-Aryan Languages

Map P.1 Distribution of Language Families in South Asia
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

been making further efforts at decipherment by paying particular attention to the 'homophones' of the script. According to him, for example, two specific signs in combination represent Ursa Major (in Tamil *eḻu mīn*).[11]

Most scholars, including Parpola, had been trying to decipher the so-called Indus script *as a script* but, in 2004, three American scholars—S. Farmer, R. Sproat, and M. Witzel—published a new theory stating that the so-called Indus

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Earlier, H. Heras had also tried to decipher the Indus script using this method.

[11] In the inscription of a seal, this is represented by signs of the numeral seven and a fish. 'Fish' and 'star' are homophonic (*mīn*) in Tamil (Parpola 1994: 195).

scripts were not scripts of any language but just signs indicating ideas (Farmer et al. 2004). This caused a controversy among scholars.[12] Whatever the result of this controversy, the identification of the language spoken by the people of the Indus civilization relates to the homeland of the Dravidian as well as Indo-Aryan language groups.

Since the mooting of the Indo-European language family by William Jones in the eighteenth century, most scholars have been of the opinion that the Indo-Aryans migrated to India in the second millennium BCE; though their homeland was suggested variously as located in northern Europe, southern Russia, central Asia, and so on, its identification has remained controversial (Fortson 2004). Recently, however, some scholars have made strong claims that the Indo-Aryans originated in India and some groups among them migrated to Europe instead of coming from outside, creating a severe controversy.[13]

Moreover, from the late twentieth century, in addition to the linguists and archaeologists, who had long been involved in the study of the homeland of the Dravidians and Indo-Aryans, scholars specialized in palaeontology, palaeoanthropology, or genetic anthropology also began to join the debate, and this has both advanced as well as complicated the study.

For example, F. C. Southworth, a linguistic palaeontologist, regards early proto-Dravidian as partly agricultural, practising animal husbandry along with gathering and processing of food plants, but with very few identifiable crops. But, at the same time, he also finds evidence for incipient social stratification, private property, and commercial activity in proto-Dravidian (Southworth 2005: 242; 2009: 109). The issues around whether a people belonging to a language group are agricultural or pastoral, the degree of their social development, and other cultural features concern the migration/settlement of the group. Genetic research has revealed the relation between the modern populations in central Asia and eastern Europe and higher castes in north India (Wells 2002).

According to P. Bellwood, an archaeologist who specialized in Indo-Pacific prehistory, the Indo-Aryans came to India a little before 3000 BCE and advanced immediately afterwards to the Ganges valley. As for the Dravidians, he supposes that proto-Dravidians, who were closely related to the Elamite speakers in Iran, lived in the northwestern part of the Indian subcontinent even before 3000 BCE, partly forming the population of the Indus cities together with Indo-Aryans, at a time when the Indus civilization was flourishing. However, some of them, both the Indo-Aryans, who entered the area before 3000 BCE, and the Dravidians, started moving southwards around 3000 BCE. But the Dravidians, who were at that time basically pastoralists, pushed onwards into the Deccan and finally spread all over the south developing their millet agriculture, while the Indo-Aryans, who depended on southwest Asian winter cereals, limited themselves to Maharashtra and the north (Bellwood 2009: 64).

Some of these findings and hypotheses, both old and new, support each other, but others are quite contradictory. It is extremely difficult, given all these diverse findings and theories, to explain satisfactorily the relationship amongst the Dravidians, the Indo-Aryans, and the people of the Indus civilization. As a result, we are currently still far from determining the original homeland of the Dravidians. It is expected, however, that further development in th study of archaeology, such as archaeo-botanica study, and of minor Dravidian languages whic remain only as spoken languages, will help u in identifying the homeland of the Dravidians

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[12] The problem now has become the decipherability of linguistic/non-linguistic systems by computational analysis. See the discussion in *Computational Linguistics* (MIT Press e-journal), 36, no. 4 (December 2010).

[13] This idea was first proposed by Friedrich Schlegel in the late eighteenth century. Recently, this thesis was revived by Shrikant Talageri and Koenraad Elst and invited Michael Witzel's criticism (Witzel 2001; Talageri 2008).

SPLITTING-UP OF THE PROTO-DRAVIDIANS

As we have seen, scholars at present differ greatly about the origin of the Dravidians. Even between the two scholars, Krishnamurti and Southworth, who suggest indigenous origins for the Dravidians, the direction in which the Dravidian groups moved/migrated is diametrically opposite. However, if we take the period of a few centuries towards the end of the second millennium BCE, the difference in their scenarios narrows down. Therefore, we shall subscribe here to Krishnamurti's view regarding the settlement of the major Dravidian language groups in south India after the end of the second millennium BCE.

As stated earlier, the proto-South Dravidian (SD) group is supposed to have split to SD I (Tamil, Kannada, and others) and SD II (Telugu and others) around 1100 BCE, the former group occupying Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu, and the latter group, Andhra Pradesh. In the next stage, pre-Tamil spli from the rest of SD I, including Kannada, i the sixth century BCE. Then, there develope early Tamil in the third century BCE, wit Toda, Kodagu, and others having branche off. Malayalam separated from Tamil muc later—between the ninth and thirteenth centuries CE. Early Tamil produced the poeti Sangam literature around the beginning of th Common Era, as will be seen in Chapters 1 and 2, taking us to the beginning of our narration of south Indian history.

In the meantime, from the first half o the first millennium BCE, there appeared i south India megalithic burials indicating th development of society. In Chapter 1, we shal narrate south Indian prehistory by examinin archaeological evidence, including finds o southern Neolithic complexes and megalithi burials.

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CHAPTER 1

Before the Common Era

Beginnings of South Indian History

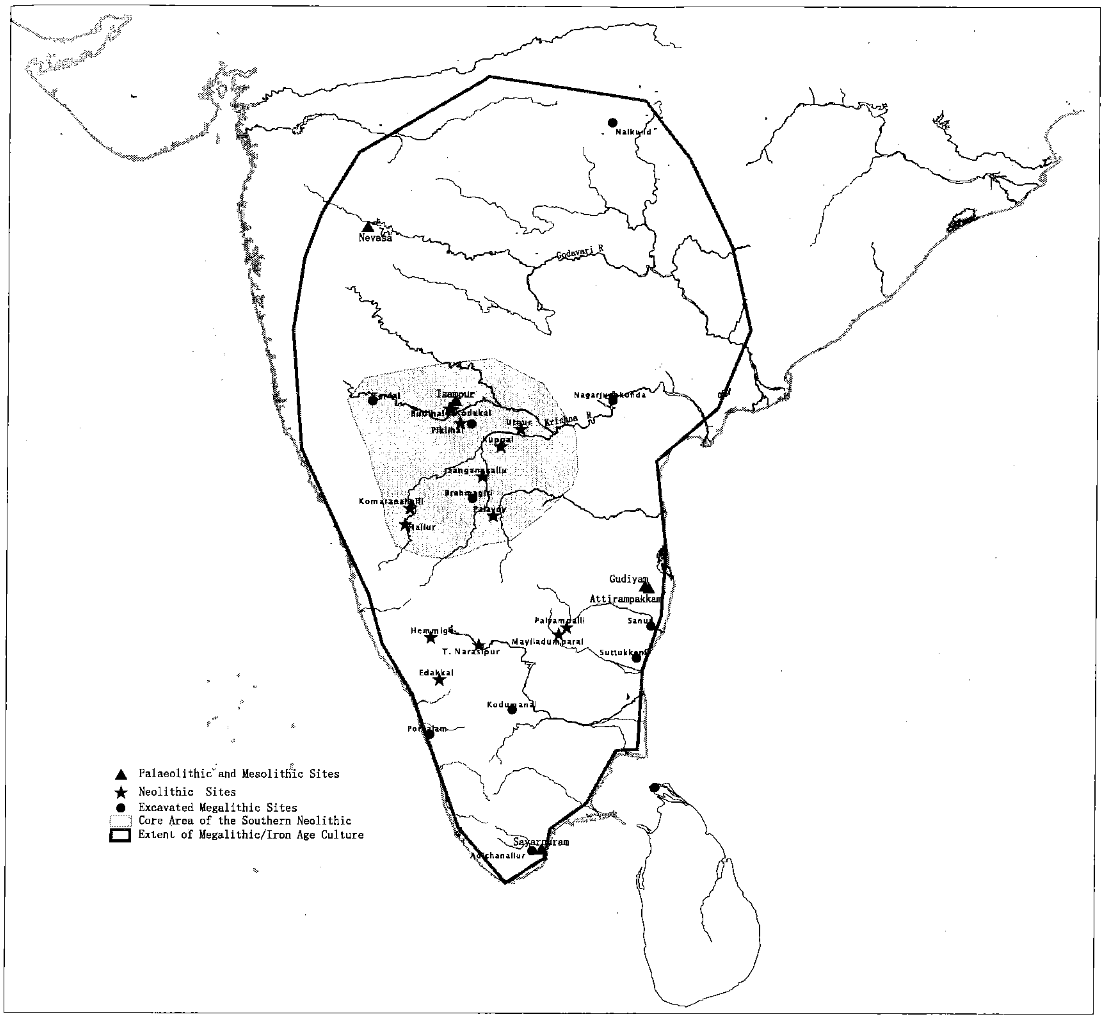
1.1 PREHISTORIC CULTURES

P. SHANMUGAM

1.1.1 Palaeolithic Cultures

Studies in the prehistory of India started with the discovery of a hand axe by Robert Bruce Foote in 1863 in the vicinity of Pallavaram, near Chennai (Madras). Since then, in addition to his own surveys in different parts of the then Madras Presidency, the explorations of many other archaeologists during the past one and a half centuries have filled up the prehistoric map of India and have more or less linked it to developments in world prehistory (see Map 1.1). Also, the prehistory of different parts of India has been integrated well on the basis of geo-archaeological studies of major river systems coupled with other archaeological methods such as the study of tool manufacturing techniques. In field studies, certain scholars have emphasized the understanding of hominid behaviour in various regional settings by prolonged observation of certain least-disturbed fossilized archaeological sites (Paddayya 1982). Another useful development is the understanding of prehistoric stone-tool-using communities by carrying out ethno-archaeological studies of some technologically underdeveloped or stunted tribal communities surviving in certain hilly and forest areas and using the findings in a comparative way, of course, within certain limitations (Murty 1981). Some sites have been subjected to systematic excavation too, such as Attirampakkam in Tiruvallur district northwest of Chennai and in the Hunsgi valley in the middle reaches of the Krishna in Gulbarga district. The present understanding of the stone-tool-using cultures of India is that the Stone Age may be classified into two major divisions: Palaeolithic and Neolithic. The Palaeolithic in turn is subdivided into lower, middle, and upper Palaeolithic cultures, followed by the Mesolithic culture. In geological chronology, the Palaeolithic cultures start from the middle Pleistocene period and go on to almost to the end of the Pleistocene period and even into the first half of the Holocene period.

The lower Palaeolithic culture in south India is characterized by Acheulian-type tools, namely hand axes and cleavers. During the early stages, the tools are crude and heavy and have zigzag


Nalkund
Nevasa
Godavari R
Isampur
Budihal
Kodekal
Piklihal
Utnur
Krishna R
Nagarjunakonda
Kupgal
Sanganakallu
Brahmagiri
Komaranahalli
Hallur
Palavoy
Gudiyam
Attirampakkam
Paiyampalli
Sanur
Hemmige
T. Narasipur
Mayiladumparai
Suttukkeni
Edakkal
Kodumanal
Porkalam
Sayarpuram
Adichanallur
▲ Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Sites
★ Neolithic Sites
● Excavated Megalithic Sites
▨ Core Area of the Southern Neolithic
☐ Extent of Megalithic/Iron Age Culture

Map 1.1 South India—Palaeolithic to Iron Age
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

cutting edges. In the later stages the tools are thinner and less heavy, fully flaked with little cortex, and have straight cutting edges. They are more standardized and, in addition to hand axes and cleavers, the late Acheulian tools also contain scrapers of various types made from cores and flakes. The tools were believed to have been used for various functions like hunting, butchering, digging of roots, and making wooden implements.

The associated faunal remains of this culture, so far known from the river valleys of the Narmada and Godavari, are elephant (*Elephas hysudricus*), horse (*Equus namadicus*), cattle (*Bos namadicus*), and wild boar (*Sus namadicus*) indicating a palaeo-environment marked by moist deciduous woodlands and grasslands (Murty 2012). Radiometric dating of the bones of faunal remains and volcanic ash puts the Acheulian phase's time-span between 1.2

million years to 150,000 years. The discovery of parts of a fossilized human cranium on the banks of the Narmada dated to between 500,000 years and 236,000 years, in association with middle-to-late Acheulian industries, though isolated so far, has given rise to some interesting discussions related to the dispersal of hominids from Africa and the origin of modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) (ibid).

Tools of the middle Palaeolithic period (radiometric dates 125,000–40,000 Before Present [BP]), which was christened 'Nevasan' by Sankalia, have been discovered in different parts of south India, showing human adaptation to varied environments. Some of the discoveries were made at occupation sites. The tools are smaller in size and mostly prepared from the detached flakes of pebble cores or big stones and include small-sized hand axes, scrapers of various types, borers, points, and choppers (see Figure 1.1). Some important sites are Nevasa, Adamgarh Hill (Maharashtra), Sanganakallu (Karnataka), Renigunta, Kurnool, Nagarjunakonda (Andhra Pradesh), and Attirampakkam, Gudiyam, and Vadamadurai (Tamil Nadu). The tools are assigned to the late middle Pleistocene to upper Pleistocene times on geomorphologic grounds.

The upper Palaeolithic culture (40,000 to 8,000 BP) is found widely in several cave sites in the river valleys of the southern part of the Eastern Ghats and in other parts of peninsular India. The distinctive feature of the stone tools of this culture is the production of blades from prismatic or fluted cores. Other tools comprise burins, awls, and a variety of flake and core tools, including various kinds of scrapers. The tools being very small must have been mounted on wooden or bone shafts using resins. Fine-grained quartzite, chert, jasper, chalcedony, and limestone were the raw materials used for making them. The bone-tool industry was an important trait of this culture, as is evident from the excavation of the Billa Surgam caves in the Kurnool area. Though in the Vindhyan cave sites much rock art is found associated with the upper Palaeolithic culture, we do not see any art remains in the south. The associated faunal remains from the Kurnool caves belong to the late Pleistocene age. The animals identified so far are *nilgai*, antelope, wild boar, tiger leopard, sloth bear, and the jungle cat.

The upper Palaeolithic culture was followed by the Mesolithic culture, sometimes inappropriately called the Microlithic culture due to a preference for Microlithic tools at this stage. Sites of the Mesolithic culture are found in varied physiographical zones—coastal areas, riverine eco-zones, plateaus, and woodlands. The *teri* sites of the southeastern coast of Tamil Nadu are well-known sites of this culture. Technologically, the Mesolithic culture is an extended development of the upper Palaeolithic tradition, producing blade and bladelet tools by pressure retouch. The common artefacts are backed points, blades, lunates, triangles, and trapezes (see Figure 1.2). While quartz is a predominant raw material for making Microlithic tools in Kerala, in most other parts of south India, besides quartz, chert, jasper, chalcedony, agate, and crystal are also used. It has been observed that in some sites like the Kurnool caves, the raw material for making blades has been fired. Besides the microliths, sling balls, quartzite hammer stones, and some heavy-bored spherical stones were also part of the tool equipment. From the paintings in Vindhyan rock shelters it may be inferred that the bow and arrow was a common hunting weapon during this period. From this and an assemblage of Microlithic tools, which could have been mostly compound tools made with hafted or strapped wooden or bone shafts, the Mesolithic people are considered to have been versatile hunter-gatherers in various

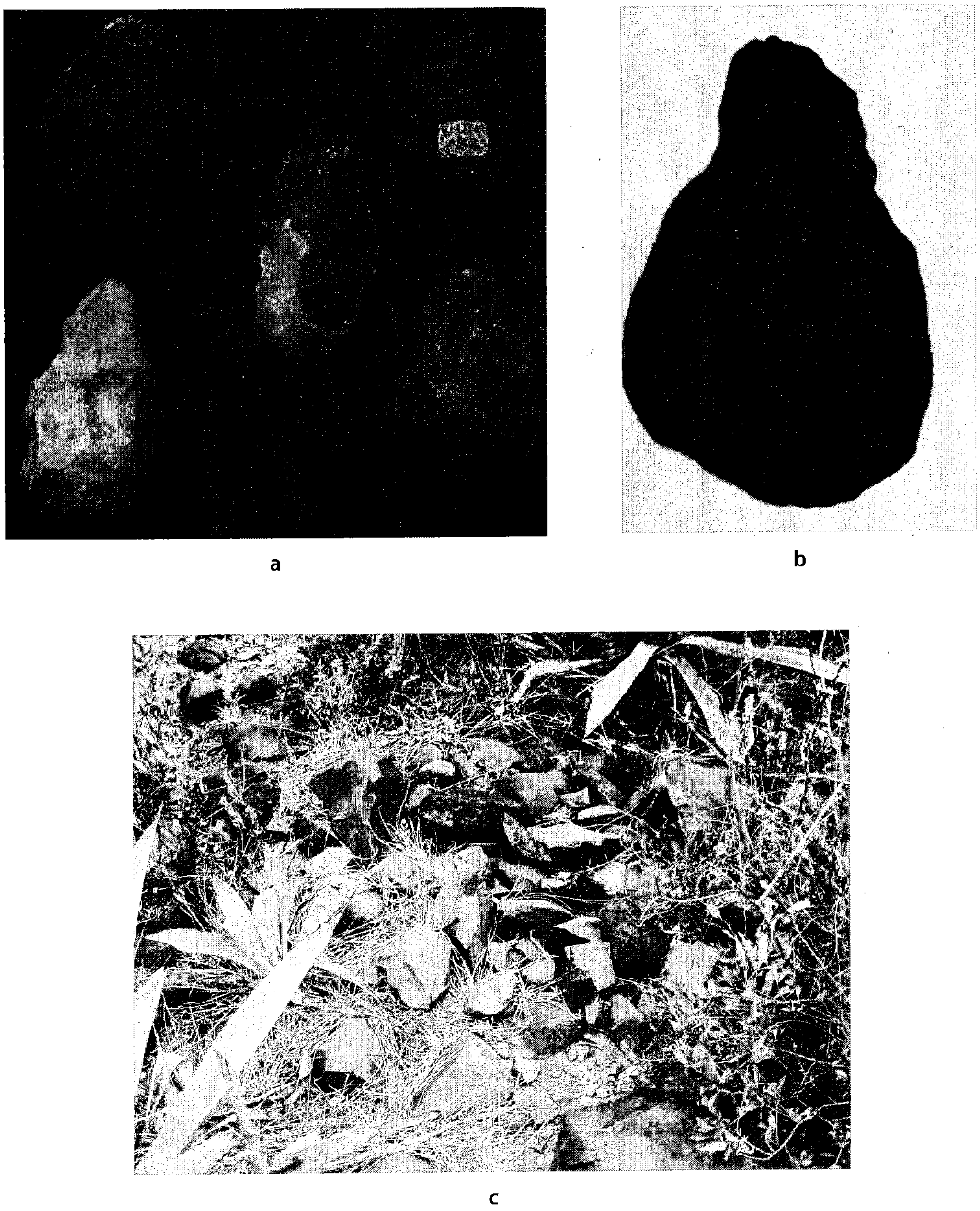


Figure 1.1 Palaeolithic Tools
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

environments. They also occupied themselves in fishing. Radiocarbon dates to the Mesolithic sites on the Vindhyan Hills suggest a time range from 8500 BCE to 2000 BCE. On typological comparison, this time range can be applied to south Indian sites as well. However, in

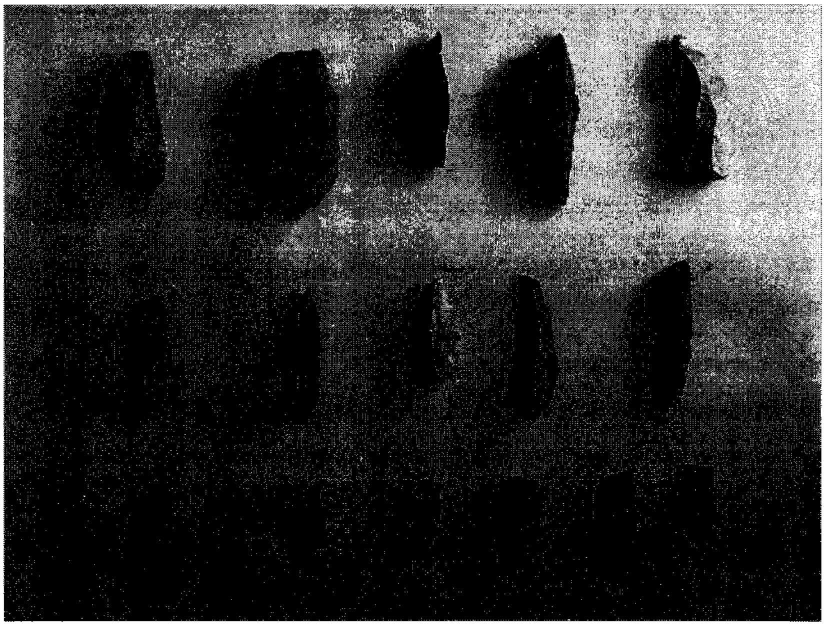


Figure 1.2 Microlithic Tools
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

certain Neolithic sites, and Iron Age sites too, Mesolithic tools have been found, suggesting the survival of hunter-gathering communities along with agro-pastoral communities of the Neolithic and Iron Ages (Selvakumar 1996).

1.1.2. Neolithic Culture

The Neolithic culture is considered a very important stage in human progress as it marked the first stage of the introduction of agriculture and food crops through human effort. Within India, four distinct Neolithic culture zones, each having its own chronology and cultural traits, have been found. The Neolithic culture of south India, simply the southern Neolithic, is found over a wide area covering a major part of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh (Belgaum, Bijapur, Gulbarga, Raichur, Bellary, Kurnool, Anantapur, Tumkur, Bengaluru [Bangalore], and Mysuru [Mysore] districts) and the northern districts (Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Salem, and North Arcot) of Tamil Nadu. In the central and southern parts of Tamil Nadu and also in Kerala, no concrete evidence is so far available for the existence of a true Neolithic culture.[1] A concentration of Neolithic sites is found in the middle and upper reaches of the Krishna–Tungabhadra river system. Robert Bruce Foote, who discovered numerous sites in the Karnataka part, inaugurated the serious study of this phase too. Its stratigraphical–chronological position was made known for the first time by the excavations at Brahmagiri (Wheeler 1948). Subsequently, a

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[1] However, the famous Edakkal caves (near Sultan Battery in Wynad District) in Kerala are believed to be camping shelters of the Neolithic community. The walls of the cave have imposing images, 'the world's richest pictographic gallery of its kind' executed over a period of time; the major part of them may belong to one phase that is considered late Neolithic datable to the first millennium BCE (Gurukkal 1997).

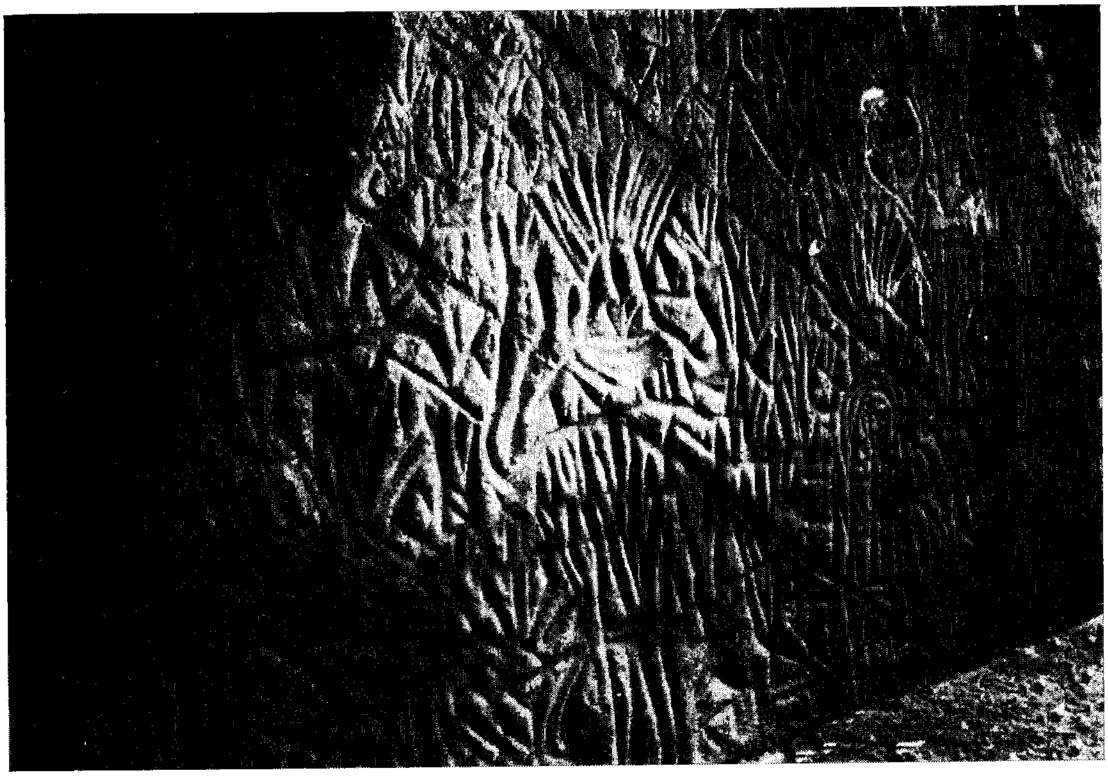

Figure 1.3 Rock Engravings at Edakal
Source: Courtesy of Rajan Gurukkal.

number of significant excavations took place at the Neolithic sites of Sanganakallu, Maski, Piklihal, Nagarjunakonda, and so on, and several intensive regional surveys were undertaken in the Andhra and Karnataka regions. These studies have thrown much new light on various aspects of this culture: settlement patterns, nature of dwellings, food grains, burial practices, ceramic and stone tool traditions, and also on the ash mound appurtenances of the sites. While the chronology of the different phases of this culture is more or less settled, the origins of Neolithic culture are not clear; the settlements here seem to appear suddenly about 3000 BCE while the other neolithic cultures in India appear to have some antecedents (Allchin and Allchin 1997: 100). The Neolithic culture lasted till about 1000 BCE, but some remnants are found during the subsequent Iron Age as well, and this is attested to by the occurrence of Neolithic hand axes (celts) in Tamil Nadu and Kerala in Iron Age contexts.

The people of the Neolithic culture were primarily cattle-keepers and to some extent cultivators of a range of millets and other crops. They lived close to small streams rather than major rivers. The early settlements were just stockaded cattle pens in open country. Later, the settlements were located on artificially made terraces on the granite hills, and consisted of round huts made of wattle and daub supported by wooden posts, and with earthen floors. The heavy stone equipment of the Neolithic culture was made of basalt and included numerous finely made axes with elongated triangular outlines and cylindrical sections. Saddle querns, hammer stones, and sling balls were some of the household equipment. Their tools and equipment also included fine, regular blades made of chert. Although copper is not used much in the early stages, its use is not insignificant in the later stages. Turntables were used to make ceramic wares, which included grey, buff, or brown burnished pottery, with a small quantity of red or black slipped ware, some with painted designs. Urn burials have been found within the habitations. Most of the burials known so far are those of children, with a few exceptions containing adult remains. Burial goods included stone axes, chert blades, and pots. The few available skeletons of adults show they were of tall and large-bodied people. Since the skeletal material is scarce, the conclusions drawn from earlier physical anthropological studies of the material with regard to racial affinities are difficult to generalize and the recent critical review of them show that the basic premises and methods of those studies are ill-founded (Kennedy and Levisky 1984). In the past few decades bio- and dental-anthropological studies are being carried out to understand issues of demography and diseases rather than of racial features and affinities.

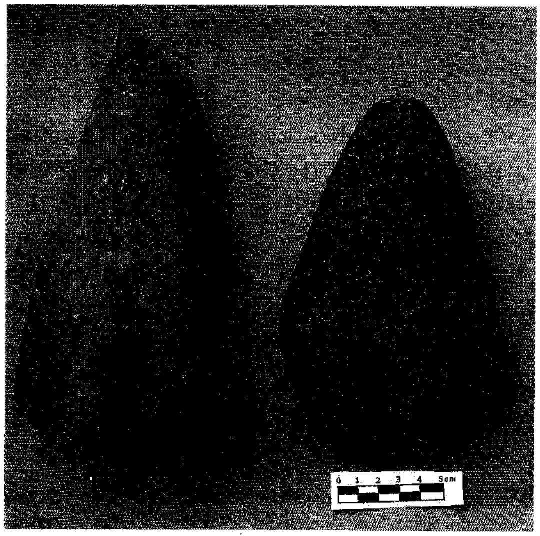

Figure 1.4 Neolithic Celts
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

The economy of this culture, as mentioned in the foregoing, was centred on cattle-keeping and cattle pens are a prominent feature of the settlements. From the bones of the cattle found in the settlements, and from the terracotta figurines and rock bruisings, the cattle appear to be lightly built, long-horned, humped animals of the *Bos indicus* breed, but not related to the heavier breeds depicted in the Indus culture area. An important and intriguing feature of this cattle-keeping culture, particularly during its earlier phase, were the huge ash mounds found at a number of sites. They were large heaps of accumulated dung that were periodically burnt, perhaps for some ritual purpose. Though some archaeologists would like to assign the ash mounds to the subsequent Iron Age, the available evidence supports only a Neolithic date (Korisettar et al. 2002). It is, however, understood that dung-burning continued on a small scale up to the early Iron Age. There appears to be some continuity from one age to another for the symbolic importance of burning the dung. The suggestion that these ash mounds were associated with metal-working is not taken seriously now. Some difference of opinion as to the nature of the associated habitations exists. There are scholars who are of the opinion that they were everywhere associated with habitations close by (Paddayya 2002), while others think that some of the ash mounds were situated far away from the habitations and mark points of pastoral transhumance (Allchin 1963).

Cultivation of food plants is considered one of the most important traits of the Neolithic age. Some detailed knowledge of their agriculture is now available. The pulses horse gram (*Dolichos uniflorus*), green gram (*Phaseolus radiata*), and the bigger millet (*Brachiaria ramosa* or *Sorghum vulgare*) and the pearl millet (*Pennisatum glaucum)* were the staple crops of the Neolithic community. Several other crops are attested to in the later Neolithic age: *ragi* (*Eleusine coracana*), common foxtail millets (*Setaria veticillata* and *Setaria italica*), black and red grams, and hyacinth beans (*Lablab purpureus*). Most millets associated with this culture were earlier believed to have been of African origin. Recent studies dispute this contention and suggest that a few food crops might have been introduced from Africa during the later stages, perhaps due to maritime contacts with the African coast (Korisettar et al. 2002). Ongoing studies suggest that the earliest crops were indigenous to southern India and domesticated locally, and those crops appear to have played an important role in the early agricultural economy of peninsular India. Later, in the second and first millennia BCE, crops of Near Eastern and African origins were integrated into, and in many cases came to dominate, local agricultural systems.

Of late, there have been some serious studies attempting to link the archaeo-botanical evidence and the ancient agricultural vocabulary in proto-Indo-Aryan and proto-Dravidian languages as reconstructed using methods of historical linguistics. This was done with a view to understanding the identity and movements of the linguistic communities of the Neolithic and Iron Age cultures of India in general and of peninsular India in particular (Southworth 2005 and 2009; Bellwood 2009; Fuller 2009). These studies more or less concur that the Dravidian language group are the authors or originators of the southern Neolithic culture. There is, however, no unanimity of opinion on the question of whether this Neolithic community is indigenous to peninsular India or migrated from elsewhere, and if they came from outside, from where and when (see the first section of the Prologue). Further studies in archaeology and linguistics are necessary.

1.2 MEGALITHIC BURIALS AND GRAFFITI

Y. SUBBARAYALU

1.2.1 Megalithic Burials

Megalithic structures for funerary or memorial purposes, specifically made using huge stones since the fifth millennium BCE, ranging from Neolithic to historic times, are found in several parts of the world. At a few places, the practice of erecting such megaliths continued until recent times. The peninsular Megalithic burials, therefore, form only a strand of the worldwide phenomenon. Here they belong more or less to the Iron Age, as iron is the predominant metal of the material objects placed as grave goods. Megalithic culture has been a major field of study in Indian archaeology since the 1820s and there exists a vast body of literature in the form of reports and secondary works relating to this field.[2] Despite this, there is no unanimity of opinion regarding the origins, chronology, and the authors of the peninsular Megalithic complexes.

Though Megalithic burials are found even in parts of northern India, it is only in peninsular India that they are found in great concentrations—from the Vidarbha part of Maharashtra near Nagpur in the north to Kanyakumari in the extreme south. In Sri Lanka too, there are almost similar types of burials. A fairly exhaustive estimate made in the early 1990s based on the available publications gives the following distribution of Megalithic sites: 91 in Maharashtra, 300 in Andhra Pradesh, 665 in Karnataka, 607 in Tamil Nadu, and 270 in Kerala (Moorti 1994). Actually, these numbers can only be taken as tentative for the archaeological investigations carried out by various agencies were neither exhaustive nor of uniform standard. For instance, a recent village-to-village survey of archaeological sites made for the Historical Atlas of South India project has given a total of 1600 Megalithic sites for Tamil Nadu.[3] Unlike the burial sites, which are easily recognizable by their stone structures, the associated habitations are much more difficult to discern. This may be a reason for the small number of habitation sites associated with the Megalithic burial complexes. The proportion of habitation-cum-burial sites forms about twenty per cent of all the Megalithic sites. Most of the data available for these sites have been gathered from surface observations only. Not many sites have been excavated. Anyway, even the few excavations carried out to date have provided fairly rich complementary and corrective information to the impression gathered from earlier field observations.

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[2] A recent fairly exhaustive survey of the literature has been made in Mohanty and Selvakumar 2002.

On the basis of the available information relating to surface and sub-surface features, the burial structures are broadly classified into some basic types with a number of variants o sub-types:

1. Pit circles were made of a pit covere with cairn packing at the surface level an bounded by a circle of boulders or sla stones. In some cases, flat slabs were used t cover the pits instead of cairn packing.
2. Cists (also called chambers) were made o four upright slabs with a big capstone an usually buried in deep pits under the surfac and covered with cairn packing bounded b a circle of huge slabs or boulders. One of th side-slabs of the cist generally had a porthole this porthole- slab faced either south o east in different localities. Bigger cists wer sometimes partitioned into two chambers b placing a vertical slab in the middle.
3. Legged urns or legged terracotta sarcophag could be with or without cairn packin and stone circles. Here, the legged urns sarcophagi stand for the stone cists of Type 2
4. Urns with or without a capstone wer buried, sometimes with cairn packing an stone circles. At several places (for exampl Adichanallur), the capstone was replace with a pottery lid.
5. Rock-cut subterranean chambers are foun only in the laterite terrain of the Keral coast.
6. The umbrella stone (*kudakkal*) is a uniqu type of cist/pit burial peculiar to Kerala. I this variety, four inclined orthostats wer put together above the surface to look like small pyramid capped by a low dome-stone This umbrella structure, in a way, stands fo the cairn packing of the cist burials.
7. Menhirs are free-standing tall stones. The are found either individually or in a grou arranged in rows. Some menhirs are found as part of the stone circles bounding th cairn heaps of cist burials. Interestin

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[3] This was made by the research staff of the project based in the Tamil University Department of Epigraphy and Archaeology and the French Institute of Pondicherry during 2003–08 (2008, www.Ifpindia.org/hatlas/). The Tamil Nadu data is presented regionwise in K. Rajan et al. 2009. For Kerala, such an intensive survey could not be undertaken due to constraints of time, hence a smaller increase in the total, from 270 to 330, has been observed.

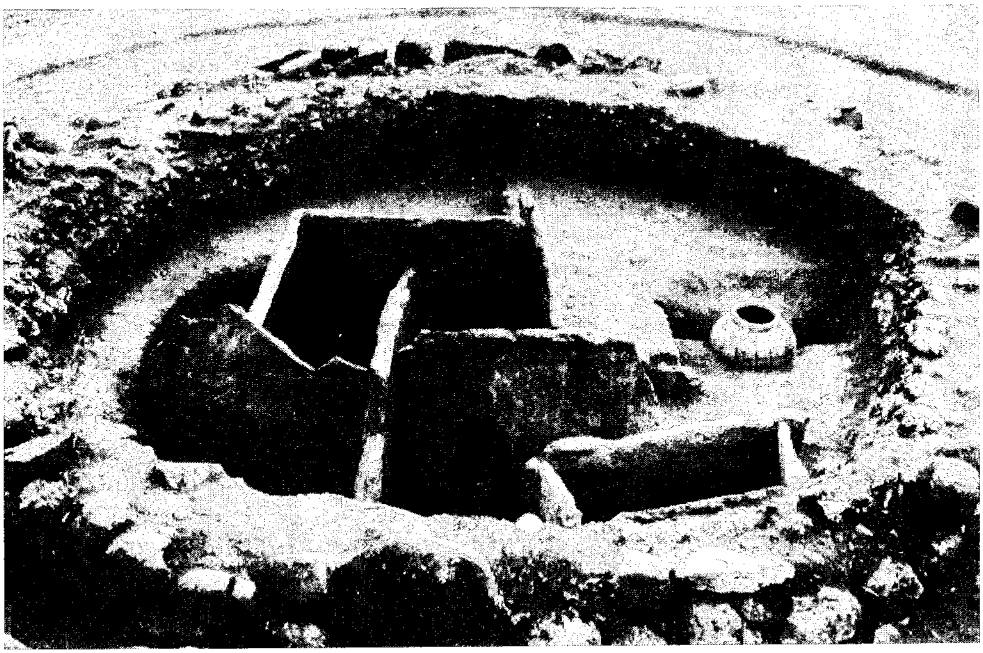

Figure 1.5 Megalithic Cist Burial
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

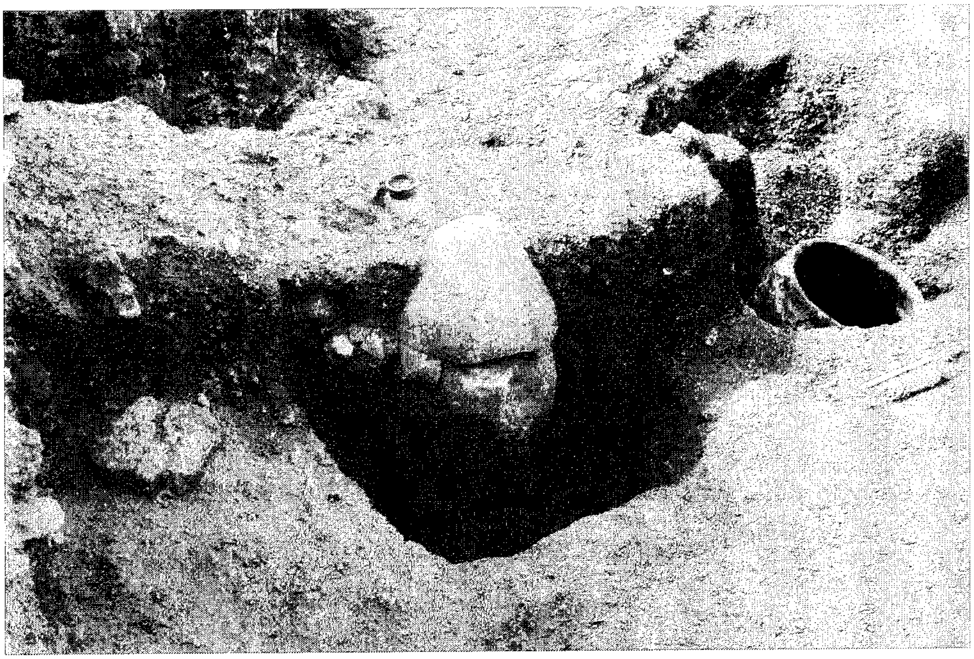

Figure 1.6 Urn Burial under Excavation
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

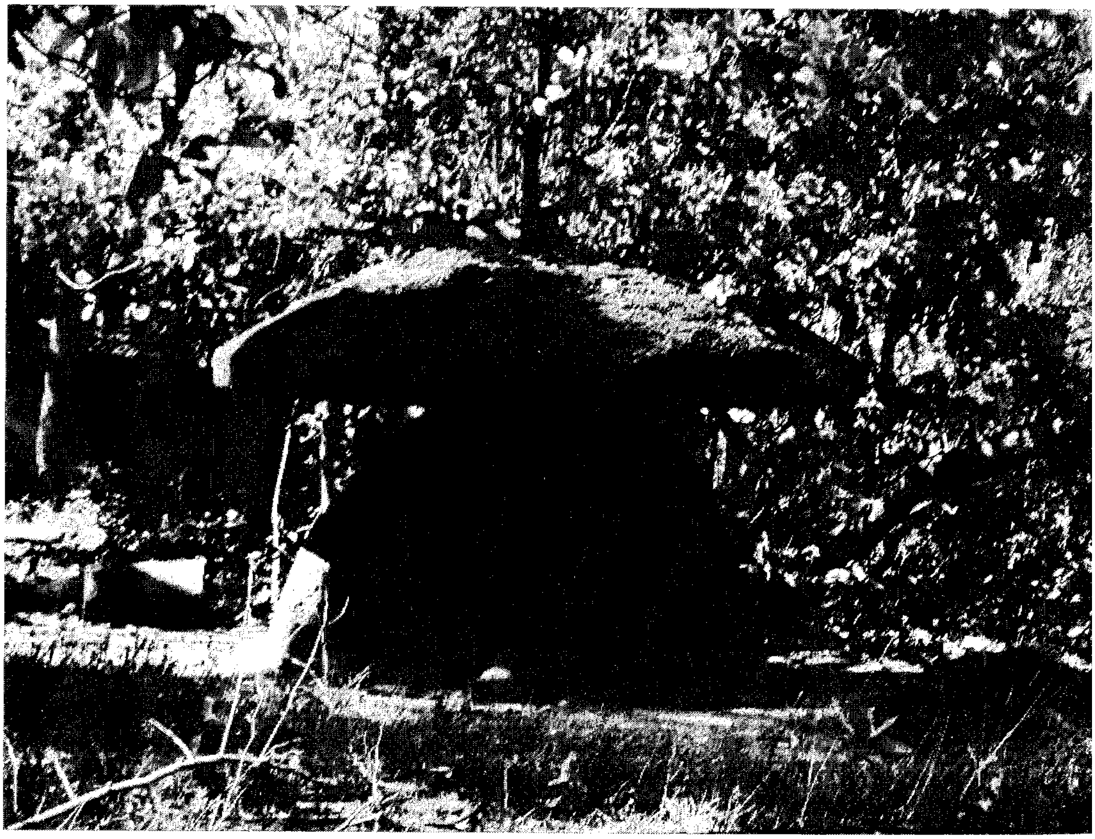

Figure 1.7 Kudakal Burial
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

menhirs shaped like anthropomorphs are seen in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

8. Dolmens, made of slabs or of big boulders, are rectangular chambers raised above the ground and usually contain no grave goods. They are open on one side or, if closed fully, have a porthole on one side.

Actually, each of these types seems to have been determined to a large extent by the geological features of the particular area, such as the predominance of cist burials in rocky terrain and that of urn burials in plains lacking rocks. At several sites, there is coexistence of more than one type.

In a majority of urn burials, the use of stone is minimal or almost non-existent. Despite this, urn burials are grouped under megaliths because the cultural materials—namely the pottery, iron objects, beads of semi-precious stones, and other such things kept in them—are almost identical to those found in the stone burials. All burials, irrespective of type, mostly belong to the category of secondary burials, containing a few bones and skulls, collected from primary burials or from bodies exposed in the open. Some contain cremated bones too. Several are just symbolic and do not have any skeletal material. Many have been found to contain bones of one or more individuals, male or female (Moorti 1989). From an analysis of skeletal material obtained from about 115 burials, 40 were single burials, 17 double, 26 multiple (3 or 4) and 32 symbolic burials. The sex and age composition of the burials is also interesting. Females were fewer in number in single burials and almost equal in multiple (perhaps family) burials. Out of 117 persons for whom age information is available, there are 11 children (two to 11 years), five adolescents (12 to 16 years), 99 young adults (17 to 35 years) and two old adults (36 to 46 years). No infant (less than a year old) was given this burial. But from the absence of the remains of older people it should be interpreted that, generally, life expectancy was less than 40 years.

The area and size of the burial sites differs from place to place. Some sites measured a few hectares and had less than fifty burials while others were large, containing several hundreds. At the urn burial sites, the burials were

Figure 1.8 Anthropomorphic Menhir
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

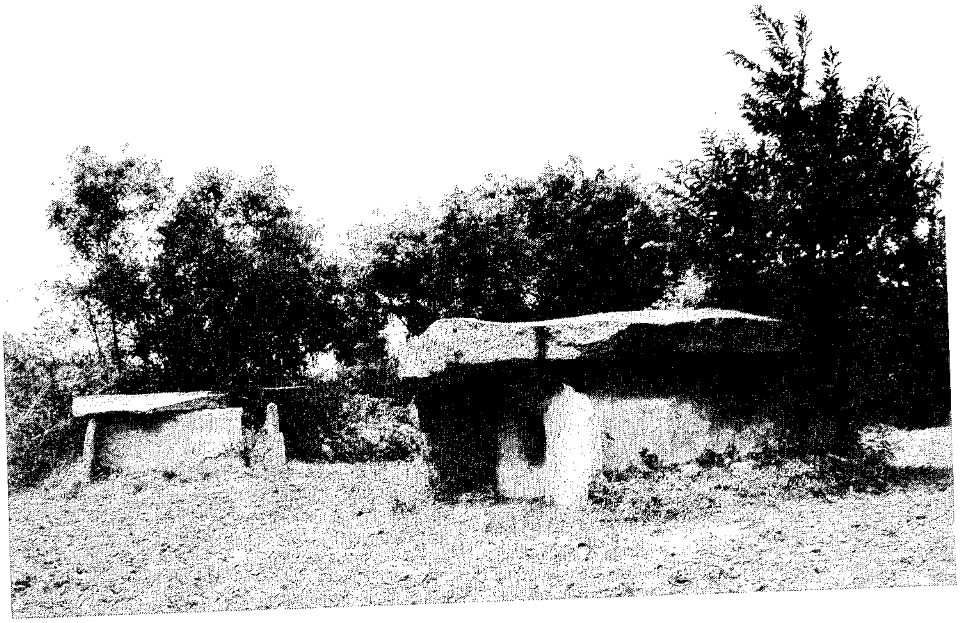

Figure 1.9 Dolmen
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

generally very crowded[4] and seem to indicate a marked demographic increase during the urn burial phase. Wherever habitations are found linked to burial sites, it has been noticed that the area of the burial site was much larger in extent compared to that of the habitation.

The dating of the south Indian megaliths has not yet been settled beyond dispute. The paucity of reliable scientific dates from combined sites indicating both burial and habitation area has been a great handicap in fixing their chronology. A few dates obtained for the Karnataka sites like Hallur from the earliest iron age habitation levels are believed to put the earlier limit of the Megalithic tradition to about 1100 BCE. The most reliable dates so far are those available for the Vidarbha sites (Naikund and Takalghat), which fix them in the eighth–seventh centuries BCE (Deo 1973). Most other dates for sites in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh fall within this time period. As for fixing the earliest date of the Megalithic tradition, Megalithic cultural deposits are found to overlap the Neolithic/Chalcolithic deposits in certain habitation sites in Karnataka. There appears some cultural continuity at those sites. It is believed that the Megalithic communities continued the Neolithic custom of burying the dead in urns. There was, however, one striking difference between the two groups: the Neolithic people buried their dead within their habitations; the Megalithic people took their dead to separate cemeteries beyond the limits of the habitations. The later limits of the Megalithic burials fall approximately in the third–second centuries BCE during which period there is Brahmi writing comparable to Asokan Brahmi in some Tamil Nadu sites like Kodumanal that actually mark the advent of the historical period in the south. There is also the possibility of the Megalithic tradition surviving in later centuries too, if we rely on some of the late radiocarbon dates. During the Sangam period, which is assigned to the early centuries CE, urn burial was still a living tradition and it was vaguely remembered and referred to by literate people until some centuries later. The tradition of raising hero-stones in memory of dead warrior-heroes may also be an extension of the menhir tradition, as the earliest inscribed hero-stones are found to be shaped like menhirs tapering upwards (Rajan and Yatheeskumar 2007).

Most of our information relating to the culture of the Megalithic folk comes from the grave goods placed inside the burials. Grave goods were kept inside the pits, cists or urns, as the case may be, along with skeletal material. The most prominent objects were pottery in burnished black-and-red ware, black burnished ware and red burnished ware. Black ware is peculiar to burials at Tamil Nadu sites and is not found in the habitations. Vessels include a variety of bowls—both shallow tray-bowls and deep bowls—larger water-pots, legged jars and urns, ring stands, and conical lids with knobs on the apex, sometimes with animal and bird figurines. Most of the pottery is common to that found in associated habitation deposits but a few types are peculiar to the burials. After pottery, iron objects are found in profuse quantities. They tend to be weapons rather than tools, and include daggers, swords, arrowheads, spearheads with hollow sockets, tridents, and a few ceremonial things. The tools, used for both agricultural and other activities, include axes with cross bands and flanged blades, hoes, ploughshares, pickaxes, sickles, wedges, long crowbars, knives, chisels, tripods, and so on. In some places, particularly in the Vidarbha area, horse snaffle-bits and perhaps what appear to

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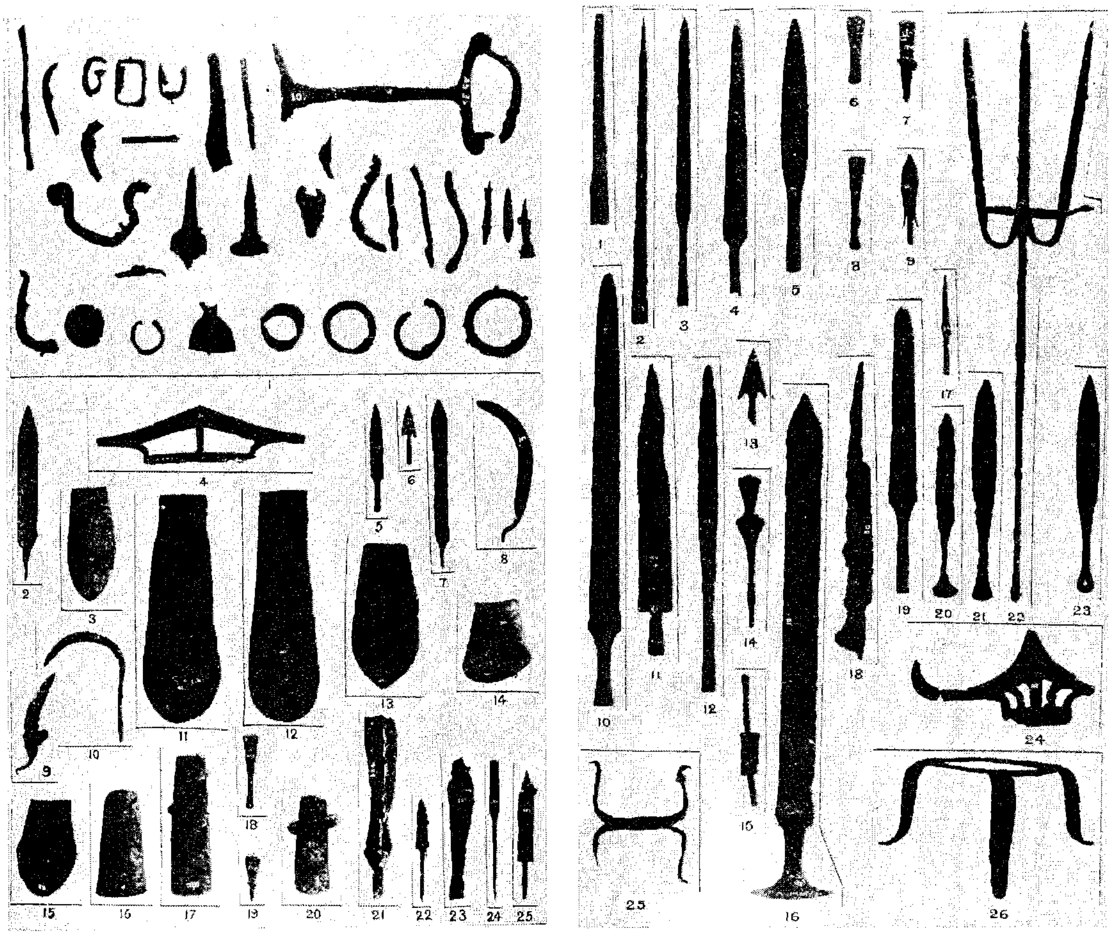
[4] It has been estimated that Pomparippu, an urn burial site in Sri Lanka, had a total of 8000 burials (Begley 1970).



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b

Figure 1.10 Iron Antiquities from Adichanallur
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

be stirrups too have been found. At a few habitation sites iron-smelting furnaces with associated materials like ore, iron slag, and fragments of crucibles have been unearthed; the crucibles might have been used for making the earliest 'wootz' steel. Objects made of other metals like copper and bronze and of silver and gold have been found in far lesser quantities, and beads made of semi-precious stones like carnelian, lapis lazuli (in small quantities), rock crystal, and soapstone in various proportions. Etched carnelian beads, which seem to have been considered very prestigious, were ubiquitous during this period.

The foregoing material evidence, comprising lots of iron weapons, indicates that the Megalithic society was prone to much warfare. Of course, agriculture was an important means of subsistence. However, the faunal and floral evidence from the habitation sites shows that pastoralism was a major component of the economy till perhaps in the later stages when there was

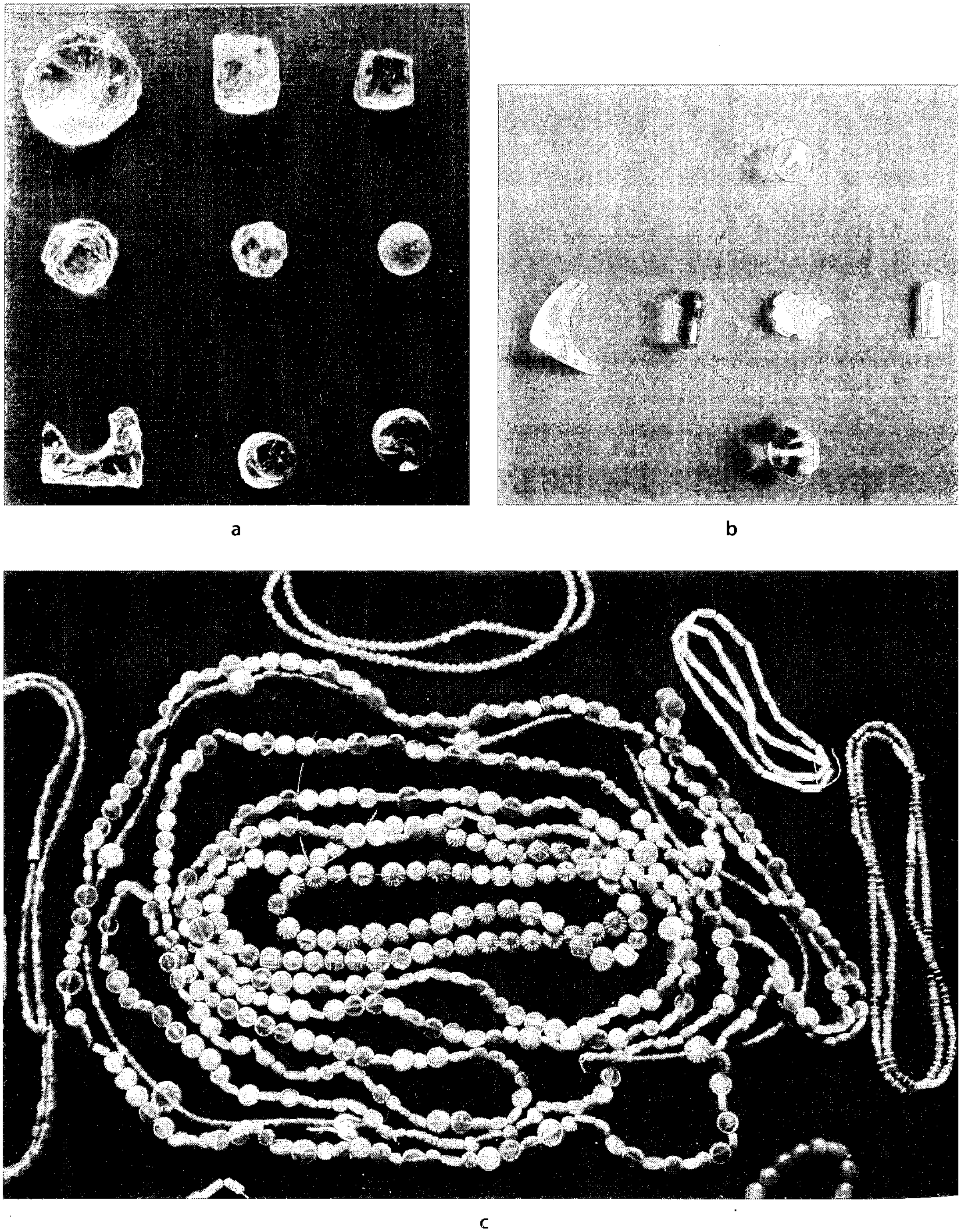

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Figure 1.11 Jewel Stones and Beads from Kodumanal
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

a major shift to coastal and riverine tracts and agriculture might have become more important (Cooke et al. 2005). Potters and iron workers must have been the most important craftsmen of the day. In certain localities there were also other specialized craftsmen like those working in gemstones. The striking similarity found in iron objects, pottery, and certain gemstone beads would support the theory of the movement of artisans over long distances, as well as a circulation of these things through exchange and trade circuits. Compared to imposing stone burials, the contemporary habitations, wherever there is evidence, look very poor; there are no stone or brick structures at all and therefore the habitation deposits are thin, generally in the range of 1–2 metres in thickness.

There are still unresolved problems in the study of Megalithic culture despite the enormous data available, one of which relates to the authors of this culture. As Megalithic burial fields are concentrated in peninsular India more or less overlapping the geographical spread of the Dravidian group of languages, Fürer-Haimendorf (Fürer-Haimendorf 1954) considered the genesis of the Dravidian language within this group and further suggested that they migrated to south India from the west over the open sea or along the coast about the middle of the first millennium BCE. But, the chronology of this movement from outside depended on the late dates given to the Brahmagiri site by Mortimer Wheeler. So this thesis was flawed as it was based on incorrect dates that are not supported by later findings, both in archaeological and linguistic studies. A typological comparison of certain pottery forms and other antiquities have led Leshnik (1974), on the one hand, and Bridget and Raymond Allchin (1996: 341–5), on the other, to propose links to graves found in Iran, Afghanistan, and the northwestern part of Pakistan but they differ widely as to the chronology of the movements. Leshnik takes the Megalithic folk as Iranian-speaking nomadic groups that arrived in the south in about the third century BCE whereas the Allchins put the migration in the eleventh century BCE or thereabouts.

Archaeological studies since the early 1970s have demonstrated a cultural overlap and continuity between the southern Neolithic culture and the Megalithic culture. Also, black-and-red pottery and iron, once considered distinctive features of the Megalithic culture, are not given the same emphasis now. Black-and-red pottery occurs from the late Indus culture onwards and is found widely distributed in the Gangetic valley and other northern parts of India, both in Chalcolithic and Iron Age contexts. Therefore, it is treated as just a technological rather than a cultural phenomenon. Iron also is not peculiar to Megalithic culture and predates it in several localities. Rather than treating it as introduced by the Megalithic folk from the northwest, the introduction of iron is now viewed as a complex process. It has even been suggested that there is a plausibility of independent indigenous origin of iron technology at certain centres within India, instead of it being introduced from the earlier nuclear centres in the west (Chakrabarti 1992). The only baffling thing is the source of the Megalithic burial practice. As there are striking structural parallels between the south Indian megaliths and those found in some centres in the northwest, from Iran to Pakistan, there could have been some links through which that burial practice diffused into different parts of India. But those links are yet to be convincingly established.

The presumed racial affinities of the megalith builders (with Australoid/Mediterranean groups) stressed by earlier anthropologists on the basis of craniometric statistics of the skeletal material found in the Megalithic burials are considered erroneous in the light of recent, more comprehensive, anthropometric studies of the same material found in south India and Sri Lanka (Kennedy 1975; Mushrif-Tripathy et al. 2011). It is now held beyond doubt that the earlier hypothesis of biological (or phenotypic) homogeneity of the Megalithic/Iron Age populations is not correct.[5] These studies also do not support Wheeler's thesis of a catastrophic invasion of foreign people into the southern Deccan with the introduction of iron technology. On the contrary, there are said to be good grounds for assuming a biological continuity between Neolithic–Chalcolithic populations and the Iron Age ones. These new findings do support to a large extent the thesis of the southern Neolithic communities, rather than the Megalithic people, being the first speakers of proto-Dravidian languages (see sections 1.2 and 2.1).

1.2.2 Graffiti

Another factor in support of the cultural continuity argument is the graffiti found profusely on the pottery of the south Indian Megalithic/Iron Age culture. These marks are found scratched on all kinds of pottery retrieved from both the habitations and the burial monuments. Prominently scratched on the outer body so as to be clearly noticed by everybody, they include simple as well as wavy lines, circles, triangles, and quadrilaterals in different combinations. Some seem to be pictorial representations of animals and birds gradually changing into abstract linear forms. With some rare exceptions, the graffiti are all post-firing marks. Obviously, they are not potter's marks, rather the owners or users seem to have made them when the pottery was in use.

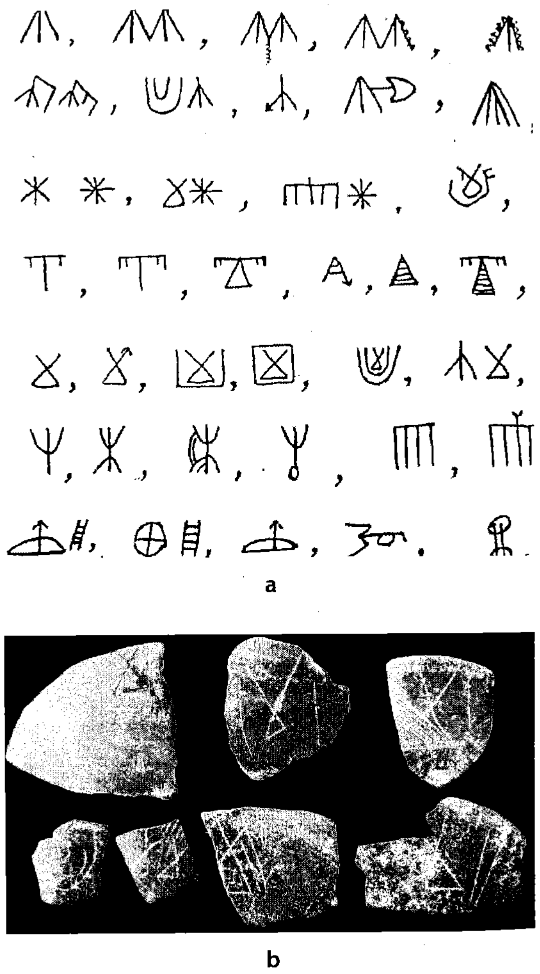

Figure 1.12 Graffiti from Kodumanal

Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

There is still no exact estimate of the total number of graffiti,[6] but one running to several hundreds.[7] If proper counting is done, ignoring the large number of fragments, the total number of Megalithic graffiti may be about a hundred or so, as it has been found that the same marks are repeated at several sites far removed from each other.[8] This number would include also marks that resemble each other but for some slight differences, say with an additional stroke or two. Generally, there is a single mark and sometimes groups of two or three. A combination of more than three symbols is rare. There are also cases where, on the same pot, the same mark has been made in two or three places. Sometimes, the graffiti mark is found interspersed with the Brahmi letters, more frequently at the end of the Brahmi writing. At a place known as Ānaikkōṭṭai in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, a seal was found with three Brahmi letters in parallel to three graffiti marks construed as Indus signs, leading to a lively but inconclusive discussion on their correspondence (Indrapala 2005: 324–5).

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[5] The degree of phenotypic heterogeneity of megalithic crania is said to be a regular feature in other south Asian cranial series from the Late Stone Age to historic times (Kennedy and Levisky 1984).

[6] Most of the published graffiti from different sites are meticulously documented in Leshnik 1974.

[7] Gurumurthy, 1999. In this study it is difficult to differentiate the graffiti of the Megalithic phase from those of the earlier phases as there is a mix-up from several sites spread all over India belonging to different proto-historic cultures starting from the Indus Valley culture. The scholar has considered each of the variants of the same form as individual graffiti, putting the total as 513.

In view of the above facts, any speculation as to the meaning and purpose of the graffiti would only be tentative. As indicated above, the possibility is to consider the marks as owner-related. This, again, has been questioned as the same mark has been found at various places and in different chronological contexts. It has been observed at some carefully excavated sites, such as Kodumanal, that each burial had a single or group of marks repeated on all the pottery included within that burial (Leshnik 1974: 128; Rajan 1991). But, at the same time, identical marks have been found in certain neighbouring burials also. Perhaps in this context the particular marks may be considered clan or family marks of sorts. This idea is, however, not plausible as such marks have also been found in distant, unrelated localities. The only tentative explanation, therefore, could be that they were symbols with cultural or religious significance. This explanation may satisfy the fact that several of these graffiti continued through many cultures. B. B. Lal (1974), after an analysis and comparison of graffiti from some fairly well-documented Megalithic sites with those from the preceding Harappan and Chalcolithic sites, has concluded that 85 per cent of the Megalithic symbols that he studied go back to Harappan and Chalcolithic times. One difference should be noted in the Indus group: though a few marks analysed by Lal have been found independently on the Indus sherds, they are generally inscribed on steatite seals as part of a group of symbols, suggesting some structural significance, but this is not the case in the Chalcolithic and Megalithic instances, which preclude any phonetic reading. Attempts made by a few scholars, such as Gurumurthy 1999 to assign them phonetic values are not convincing as they lack any logic or structural basis.

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[8] B. B. Lal (1974: 4–24), has stressed the fact that great care has to be taken to identify a distinct mark by closely looking at the original sherd and the orientation of the scratch. Otherwise, identical marks would be treated as separate marks. He has pointed out that such care was not taken by Yazdani who initiated a serious study of the graffiti of graves in the erstwhile Hyderabad state. According to Lal, after eliminating duplicates, Yazdani's total number, 131, should be actually less than 50.

1.3 BEGINNINGS OF SOUTH INDIAN HISTORY

NOBORU KARASHIMA

There are legends in Sanskrit texts such as the great epics and the *Purāṇas* that recount the migration of Aryans to south India in the remote past. One of them is the story of Sage

Agastya, who is believed to have travelled to the south. He is said to have ordered the Vindhyas, which were a great obstacle to the Aryans, to stop growing until he returned but, of course, he never returned. These stories, which went on accumulating through the centuries, can only be interpreted allegorically as evidence of Aryan speakers' movement towards the south. It is difficult to give an exact chronology of these movements, though Nilakanta Sastri put the beginning of this movement as early as 1000 BCE without citing any solid evidence before the fourth century BCE (K. A. N. Sastri 1955: 78). In Tamil literature, the legends on Agastya appear, at the earliest, only from the eighth century CE onwards. In a commentary on a grammatical treatise called *Agapporuḷ* alias *Kaḷaviyal*, he is described as the person who wrote the earliest grammar of the Tamil language (Zvelebil 1975: 56–7).[9]

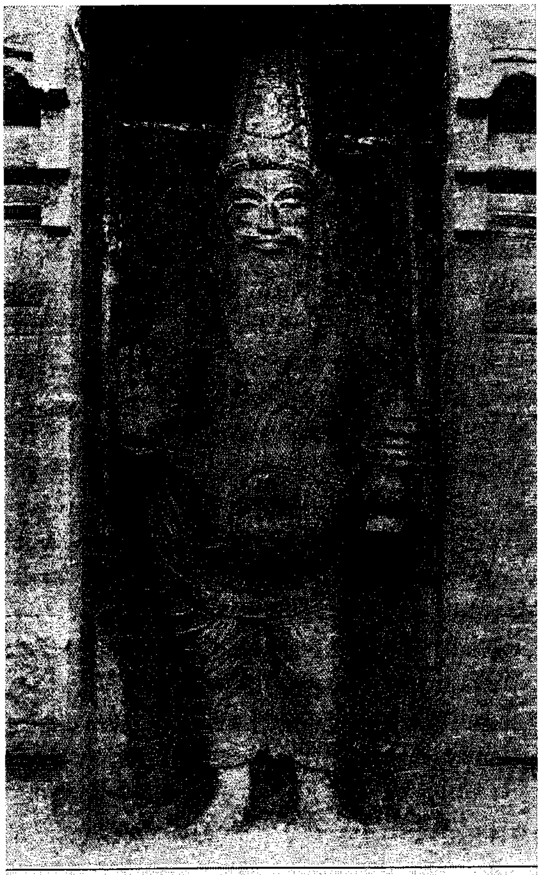

FIG. 158.—Agastya ; Chidambaram.

Figure 1.13 Agastya
Source: H. K. Sastri 1916: 258.

Apart from the Agastya legends in the north and south, the first historical reference to south India is that made by Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador sent by Seleukos Nikator to the court of Chandragupta Maurya in Pataliputra towards the end of the fourth century BCE, in his account of India, *Indika*, to a kingdom in the south which he described as ruled by Pandaia, daughter of Herakles, the greatest hero in Greek mythology. This may be a reference to the Pandyan kingdom. Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* also mentions the Pandya area as well as the Kerala coast by referring to the pearls respectively from the Tambraparni and Churna Rivers and fine cotton fabrics from Madura (K. A. N. Sastri 1955: 70 and 84). References to the southern kingdoms are found in the commentary by Katyayana around the third century BCE on Panini's Sanskrit grammar. The Sri Lankan chronicles, *Dīpavamsa* and *Mahāvamsa*, give details of Tamil kings (Sēna, Guttika, and Ēlāra) who ruled at Anuradhapura during the late third and second centuries BCE. According to *Mahāvamsa*, Ēlāra was a prince from the Chola country (K. A. N. Sastri 1957: 579; Nicholas and Paranavitana 1961: 54 and 58).

More authentic and tangible evidence comes from the second and thirteenth major rock edicts of Asoka found in several parts of India (including Erragudi in Kurnool district in Andhra Pradesh), Pakistan, and Afghanistan (see Map 1.2). The second rock edict informs the people of the neighbouring kingdoms of Choda, Pandya, Satiyaputa, Keralaputa, and Tambapanni of Asoka's benevolent policies such as arranging for medical treatment everywhere, planting medicinal plants useful to both people and animals, and planting trees and digging wells along the roads for their comfort. The thirteenth rock edict speaks about the propagation of his *dhammavijaya* (conquest by virtue) in his dominion and in the bordering territories, among which figure Choda, Pandya, and Tambapanni. As if to corroborate the Asokan inscriptions, there are a few near-contemporary Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions at Mangulam near Madurai that mention a couple of Pandyan names (Neṭuncheḻiyan, Kaṭalan, and

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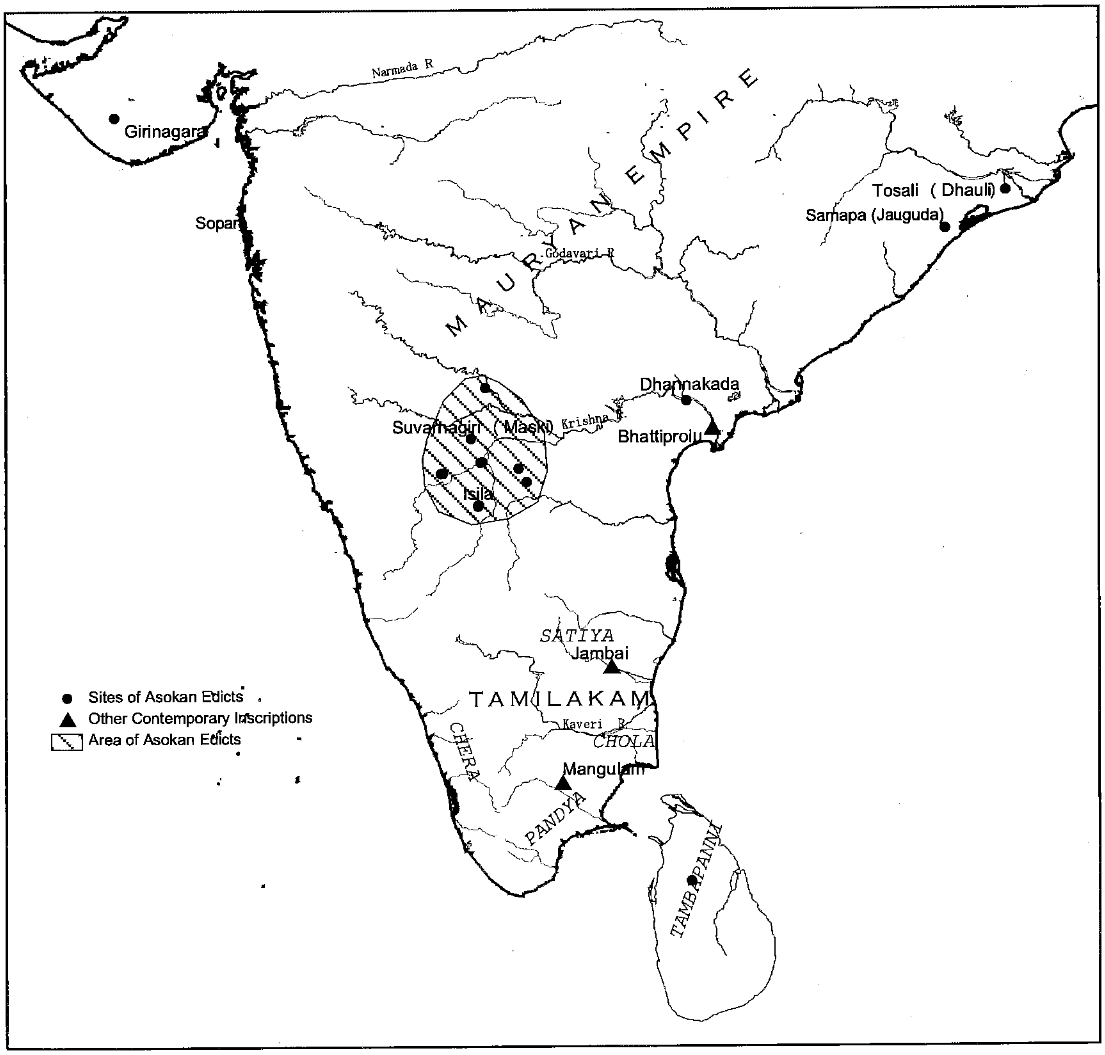
[9] For a detailed discussion of the Agastya legends, see Ghurye 1977. Nilakanta Sastri studied the role played by Agastya in the so-called Indianization of Southeast Asia (K. A. N. Sastri 1936).


Narmada R
MAURYAN EMPIRE
Girinagara
Sopara
Godavari R
Tosali (Dhauli)
Samapa (Jauguda)
Dhannakada
Krishna R
Bhattiprolu
Suvarnagiri (Maski)
Isila
SATIYA
Jambai
TAMILAKAM
Kaveri R
CHOLA
CHERA
Mangulam
PANDYA
TAMBAPANNI
● Sites of Asokan Edicts
▲ Other Contemporary Inscriptions
▨ Area of Asokan Edicts

Map 1.2 South India under Asoka (c. 250 BCE)
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

I̱lanchaṯikan) and another inscription at Jambai that bears the name of the 'Satiyaputa' or Atiya chief, Neḏumān Añji.

Tambapanni is the old name of Sri Lanka. Choda and Pandya are easily identifiable with the Cholas and Pandyas respectively of the Tamil country, mentioned in Sangam literature. Keralaputa is same as the Chēral or Chēra-mān,[10] and Satiyaputa is equated with the Atiyamān (Adiyaman) chieftains in northern Tamil Nadu (around the Dharmapuri district). The Satiyaputa-Atiyamān identification suggested earlier on the basis of linguistic grounds has later been ascertained by the discovery of the Jambai Brahmi inscription (datable to the second century BCE), which gives both the forms Adiyan and Satiyaputa,[11] as we shall see later.

Though the kingdoms mentioned above are distinctly stated in the two Asokan edicts to

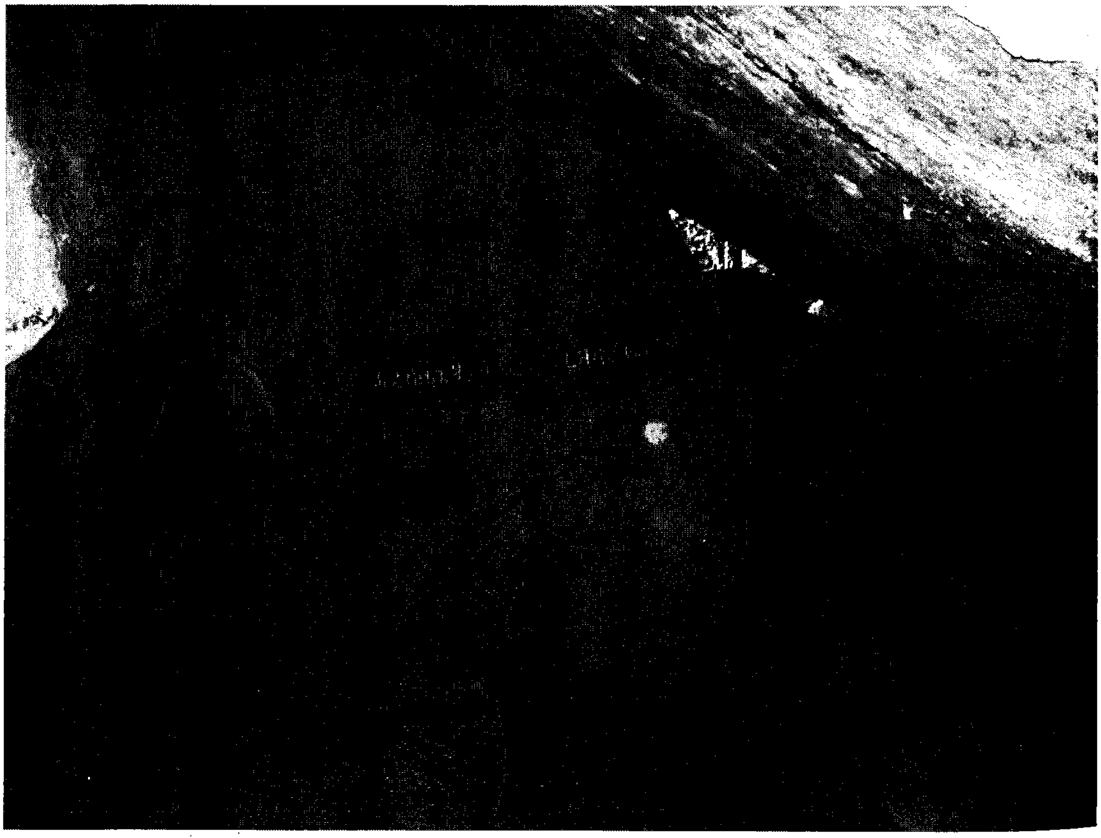


Figure 1.14 Jambai Inscription
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

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[10] Kerala in Sanskrit is equivalent to Cherala in Tamil, a variant of Cheral. *Puta* (*putra* in Sanskrit) represents *mān* in Tamil meaning son or descendant and used as a suffix to family names, for example, Chēra-mān and Atiya-mān.

[11] Mahadevan suggests the first century CE as the date of the Jambai inscription (Mahadevan 2003: 23 and 199), but it should be assigned palaeographically to the second century BCE.

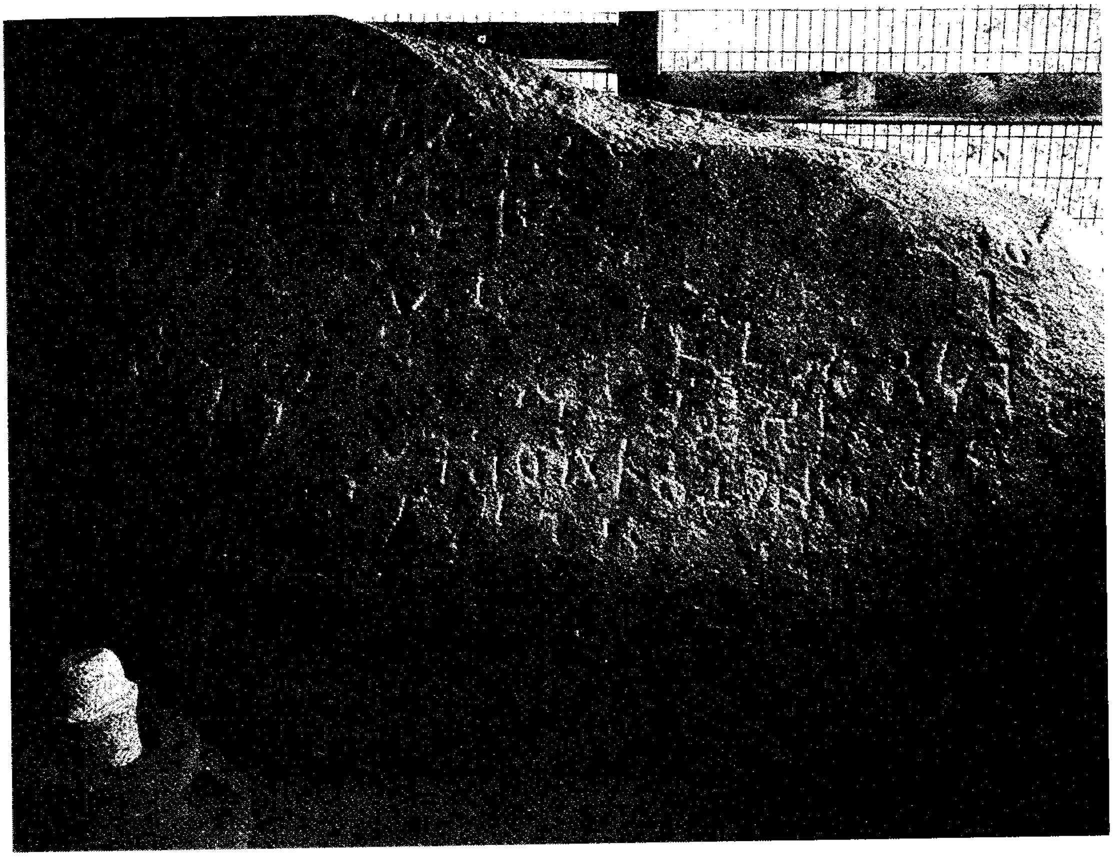

Figure 1.15 Asokan Rock Inscription at Maski
Source: Photo courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

have lain outside the Asokan empire, Mauryan rule certainly must have extended to the northern parts of Karnataka and adjoining parts of Andhra where there is a concentration of Asokan inscriptions. The inscriptions are found at almost eleven places in Gulbarga, Raichur, Chitradurga, Bellary, and Kurnool districts, besides Amaravati in Guntur district to the east. Asoka conquered Kalinga and installed a viceroy in Tosali (Dhauli), the Kalinga capital. Another viceroy was posted at Suvarnagiri (Kanakagiri) near Maski (Raichur district) in northern Karnataka. These areas in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh were already fairly populated, as we find the remains of many megalithic burials near the sites of these Asokan edicts,[12] though no ruling groups are mentioned. The stationing of a Mauryan viceroy in Suvarnagiri also indicates the political and economic importance of this locality in those days.

Two centuries after the Asokan conquest, Kalinga was ruled by the Chedi king, Kharavela, and his Hathigumpha inscription (Sircar 1965: 213: middle of the first century BCE) refers to his breaking up of an old league of Dravida countries, the identities of which are not too clear.[13] The same inscription refers to the restoration by Kharavela of a canal constructed by the Nandas, three hundred years earlier. This indicates that the Nandas extended their rule to Kalinga in the fourth century BCE. The Tamil people also knew them, as there is reference in a Sangam poem to their capital, Pataliputra, and their great treasures that were hoarded under the waters of the Ganga.[14]

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[12] This is also the area where the sites of the southern Neolithic complex are found concentrated, for which see section 1.1.

The extant Sangam poems, closely associated with the Cholas, Pandyas, Cheras, and other minor powers, including Atiyamān, are usually dated between the first and third centuries CE. Hence it is rather difficult to infer the exact antiquity of these ruling houses, which we shall discuss later. References to them in north Indian or Greek writings and the Asokan inscriptions mentioned above, however, testify clearly that they existed at least towards the end of the fourth century BCE, which falls, as seen earlier, in the stage of the megalithic burials in south India. It is also coincident with the period when a commercial network was formed regionally in south India and inter-regionally between south India and Southeast Asia. Though there is archaeological evidence to suggest that long-distance trade circuits already existed during the Iron Age/Megalithic culture from the early first millennium BCE,[15] it is only with the advent of the Mauryan Empire, particularly during the time of Asoka, that the contacts became more intense and frequent. The exploitation and control of mineral resources in peninsular India are said to have been important factors that were at the basis of the Mauryan expansion in the south. Naturally, trade would have got a great fillip under this political development. This would explain the large presence of traders from the north in the late Iron Age and the existence of early historical centres of craft production like Kodumanal (see section 1.4). As already mentioned, the development of trade between south and north India during the Mauryan period is well attested to by the statement made in *Arthaśāstra*.

Brahmanical ideas brought in by the early Aryan migrants seem to have influenced the rulers of the newly established states to some extent, and in the Deccan the Satavahana kings are known to have performed many Vedic rituals from the first century BCE; some of the Sangam kings in Tamilakam are also recorded in the poems to have performed these rituals by setting up *yūpa* pillars.[16] This influence of Aryan culture, which began to be seen towards the end of the first millennium BCE, was recalled later when the Brahmanas established their power in south India, say in the seventh or eighth century, in some highly exaggerated legends like the Agastya story.

Another legend, which is also related to the Agastya legend, concerns Kerala. Paraśurāma, son of a *rishi*, after annihilating all the Kshatriyas demarcated the land of Kerala by throwing his axe from Kanyakumari to Gokarnam, and to populate this land he brought Brahmanas from the north. There are several versions of this legend in Kerala (Varier 1990). This legend is certainly related to the migration of Nambudiri Brahmanas to Kerala, and elaborate details of this are found in what are called the *Kēraḷōlpatti* (Origins of Kerala) accounts of the fourteenth century and after, although local accounts from Gujarat to the Malabar coast and the medieval *Purāṇas* have different versions of it (Veluthat 2009: 129–46).

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[13] The passage *tramiradēśa-saṅghāta* in the inscription is interpreted as referring to a confederation of the three Tamil kings routed by the Kalinga king. This interpretation of *tramiradēśa* as the Tamil country, which is far to the south is not so certain, as the martial activities of Kharavela were confined to parts of Andhra up to the Krishna River.

[14] *Akanānūṟu*, verse 265. See also K. A. N. Sastri 1955: 83.

[15] This is attested by the presence of the NBP (Northern Black Polished) ware in some sites of coastal Andhra, and perhaps in a few sites further south (Sarma 1988: 5 and 9).

[16] See section 2.5.2.

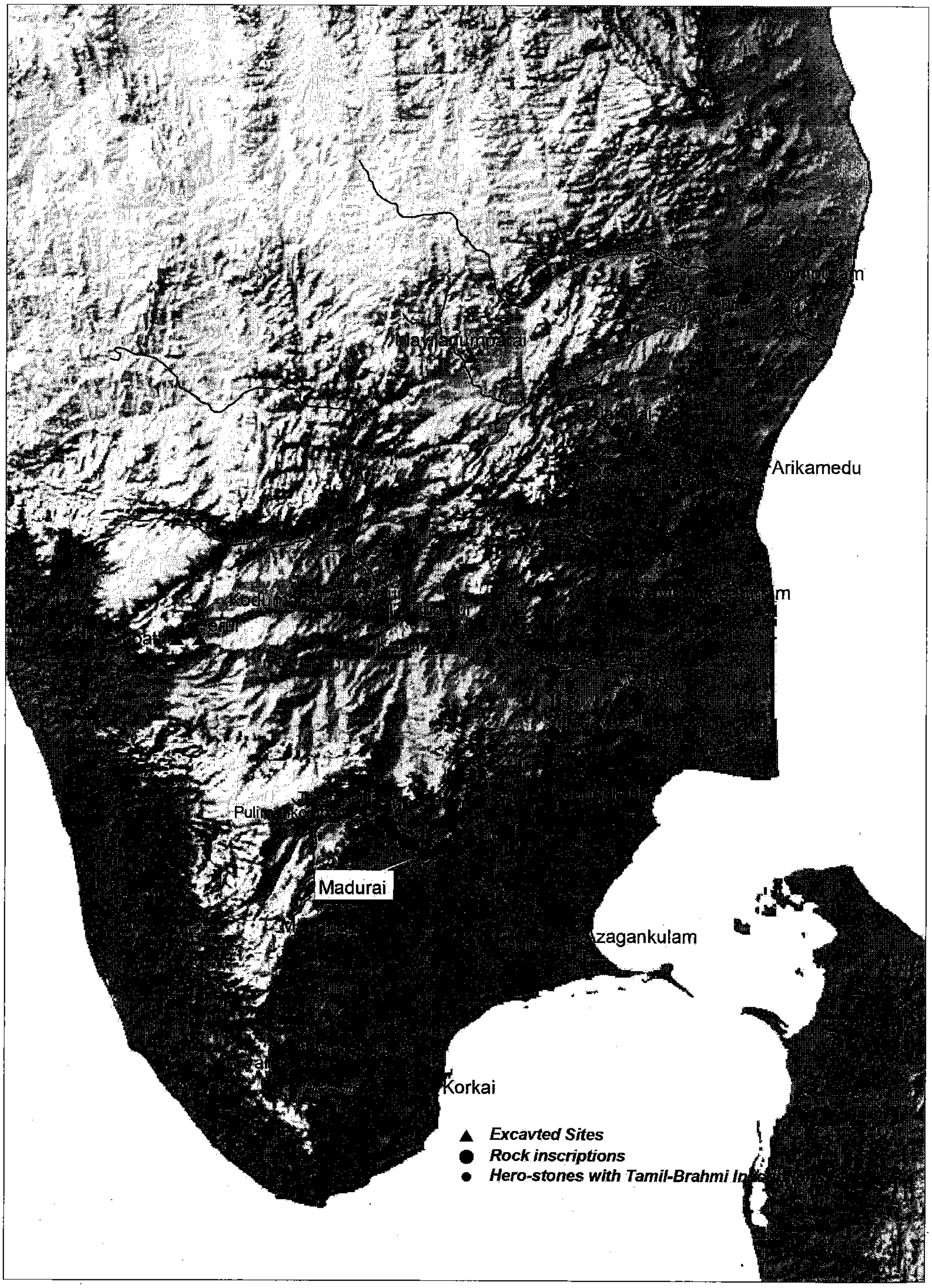
1.4 THE BRAHMI SCRIPT AND SOUTH INDIAN LANGUAGES

Y. SUBBARAYALU

In South India, Brahmi writing has been found on pottery excavated from several sites as well as in short inscriptions on rock. It has also been discovered on some metal antiquities like gold and silver rings, amulets, and coins. This Brahmi writing is more or less identical to the north Indian Brahmi script of the Asokan times. A few of the Tamil Nadu sites (Arikamedu, Uraiyur, Kodumanal, Alagankulam, and Karur) have yielded a considerable number of Brahmi sherds, while some fifteen other sites have yielded a few each (see Map 1.3). Some of these are habitation sites associated with Megalithic/Iron Age burial grounds while others are independent ones. Similarly, pottery with Brahmi writing has been found in sites in Andhra Pradesh (Salihundam [Subrahmanyam 1964], Vaddamanu, and a few others) and in Karnataka (Sannati). The Andhra–Karnataka sites with such pottery are found to be mostly Buddhist (Hanumantha Rao 1998).

These Brahmi writings may be classified into three groups: (1) those found at the Buddhist site of Bhattiprōlu in Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh, (2) others found elsewhere in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, and (3) those found in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. In the first two groups, the language is Prakrit, whereas in the third group, it is Tamil. The script of the first group is same as the north Indian Brahmi used during Asokan times and later. The Bhattiprōlu Brāhmi is of a unique kind where some diacritical marks were used to differentiate the inherent medial 'a' and 'ā' from the basic consonant, for example, *k, ka,* and *kā*, while in the Asokan Brahmi the symbol for the basic consonant is always with the inherent vowel 'a'. Most probably, the Bhattiprōlu script was newly contrived by modifying the Mauryan script to use it for a local non-Prakrit language, Telugu. This suggestion though is still speculative, as we do not have any Telugu inscription contemporaneous with it. So far, no other inscription of the Bhattiprōlu type has been discovered. The script in the Tamil area is also a modified one to suit the Tamil language, omitting aspirates and adding four new signs, namely *ḻ, ḷ, ṟ,* and *ṉ*, to denote phonemes peculiar to Tamil, hence it is called Tamil-Brahmi in standard epigraphical literature. There are reservations regarding the usage of the label 'Tamil-Brahmi', as it may imply that the script and language are closely related. A caveat may be therefore in order here that Tamil-Brahmi is only a convenient label to denote a southern variety of the Brahmi script used in the Tamil-speaking area.[17] Though there is a structural resemblance between the Bhattiprōlu and Tamil-Brahmi scripts, at present there is no firm data to relate the two scripts to say that one influenced the other.

[17] That some southern regional variants of the Brahmi script were recognized even in early Jain and Buddhist works may be inferred from the occurrence of such names as *Dāmilī* in the Jain *Pannavaṇā-sutta* (c. first century BCE) and *Drāviḍa-lipi* in the Buddhist work, *Lalitavistara* (c. third–fourth centuries CE) (Salomon 1998: 8–9).


Arikamedu
Madurai
zagankulam
Korkai
▲ Excavted Sites
● Rock inscriptions
• Hero-stones with Tamil-Brahmi In

Map 1.3 Ancient Sites in Tamil Nadu with Tamil-Brahmi Inscriptions

Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

Figure 1.16 Bhattiprōlu Casket Inscription
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

While the Bhattiprōlu script appears to be a full-fledged one without any antecedents or successors, the Tamil-Brahmi script has two stages of evolution, the first (c. third to first centuries BCE) without a dot to denote pure consonants and the second (c. first century CE onwards) with a dot to denote the same.

Unlike the north Indian Brahmi used in the Asokan inscriptions, Tamil-Brahmi does not have ligature or conjunct forms. The major problem for Tamil writers was to indicate pure consonants at the end of words, as there are in Tamil many such words, both nouns and verbs, that end in pure consonants that cannot be indicated with conjunct consonants. In Asokan Brahmi, the basic symbol for consonant, without an additional stroke or diacritical mark, represented the implicit consonant with *a*, that is, the basic form is always with the medial *a* and other medials were indicated by additional marks. Therefore, the Asokan Brahmi that was used to write Prakrit languages could not be used without some modification for Tamil. In the Tamil-Brahmi orthographical system, the Brahmi principle of the 'inherent' –*a* was given up and the consonantal symbol was regarded as basic (mute). This simple but original modification enabled the Tamil-Brahmi script to depict basic consonants in the final position and in consonant clusters without ligatures. The employment of a specific marker to depict the medial –*a* follows as the natural corollary to the abandoning of the concept of the 'inherent' –*a* in the consonantal symbol. Consequently, the short horizontal stroke to the top right of a consonant came to represent the medial *a*. In the first stage, there was ambiguity in differentiating between the short and the long medial *a* as there were no distinct diacriticals for them, whereas two distinct signs were in use in the Bhattiprōlu script for the same purpose. In the second stage, this problem was resolved by adding a dot to the basic form to indicate a pure consonant; the basic form standing for the short medial and the basic form plus the top horizontal stroke for the long medial.

In the palaeography of Tamil-Brahmi there is a general resemblance between the letters on pottery and those of the rock/cave inscriptions.[18] There is one striking difference in the use of non-Tamil graphemes. Whereas rock inscriptions use only two non-Tamil letters (*s, dh*), the pottery inscriptions use as many as eleven such letters (*kh, g, jh, ḍ, d, dh, b, bh, ś, s, h*). The few instances of aspirates and soft forms of the plosives relate to words of Prakrit origin only. Of the sibilants, the dental one (*s*) occurs frequently both in Prakrit and Tamilized Prakrit names, while the palatal one (*ś*) occurs only in Prakrit names of Sri Lankan origin (Paranavitana 1970).

The pottery inscriptions are very short and therefore the contents of these inscriptions are limited in nature. With the exception of a few inscriptions, most have only the names of persons with one segment or two.[19] A few exceptional inscriptions provide, in addition to proper names of persons, nouns relating to pots and a few other lexical items. The names are in both Tamil and Prakrit. Nearly one-fifth of the names on the pottery can be definitely recognized as Prakrit names, either in the original form or in a Tamilized form on the basis of the use of as many as eleven non-Tamil characters, and of the genitive suffixes like *śa, sa, ha,* and *ya*. There are other names of Prakrit origin that have been fully Tamilized, avoiding non-Tamil letters like Kuviraṉ (from Kubēra). There are several star-based names like Asaṭaṅ, Mūlan, Visākan, and so on. If we put together both the pure Prakrit forms and Tamilized Prakrit forms, they would

Figure 1.17 Hero-Stone with Tamil-Brahmi Inscription
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

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[18] Two evolutionary phases may be recognized in the palaeography of pottery writing, corresponding to Mahadevan's early and late phases in rock inscriptions (Mahadevan 2003: 93–5). But most of the pottery inscriptions belong to the first phase, the late phase being restricted to Arikamedu and Alagankulam.

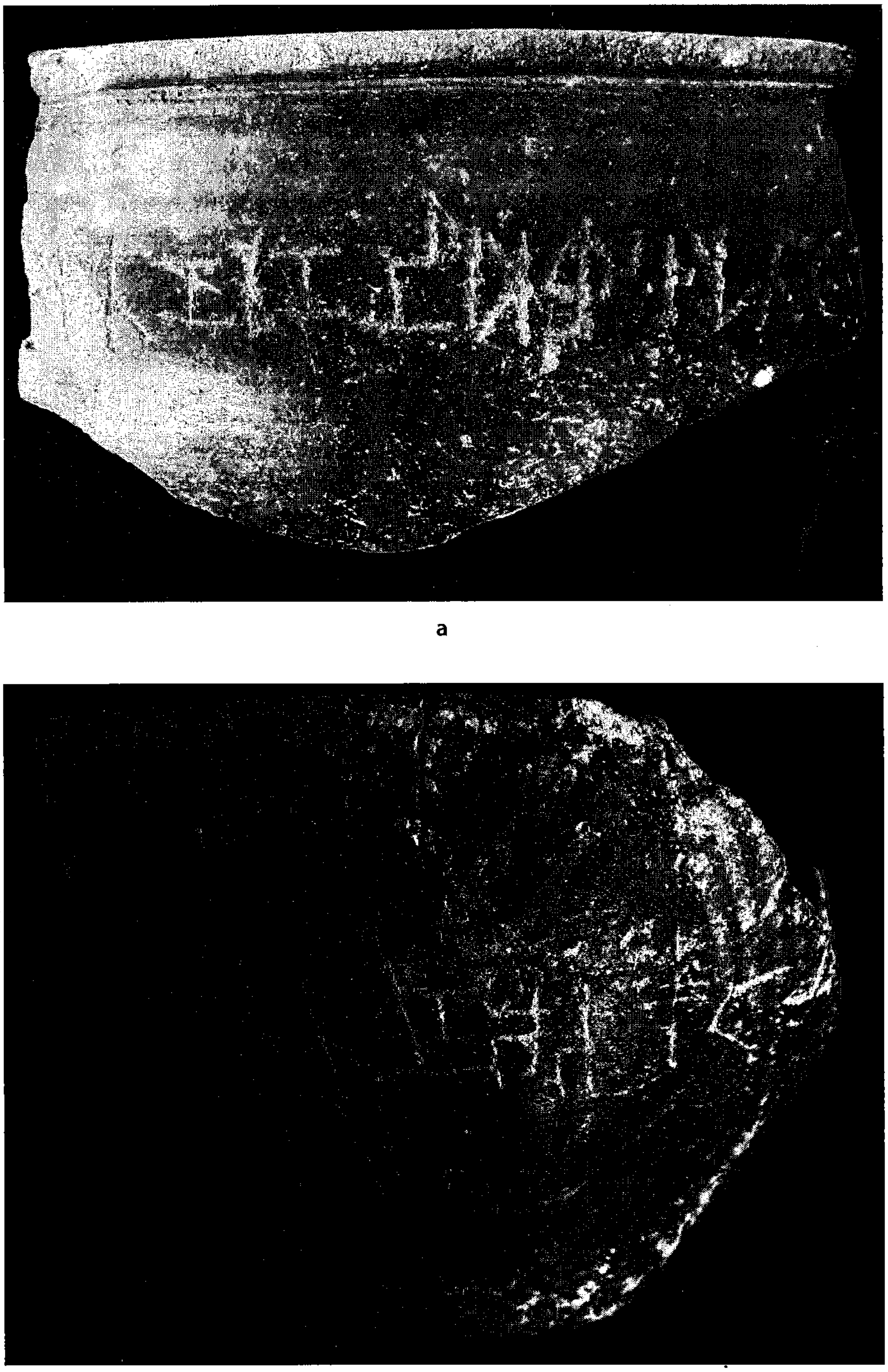
[19] All these names are listed in Subbarayalu 2008.

make nearly 50 per cent of all the names found on the pottery as well as in the rock inscriptions. It should, however, be noted that all place names and verbs in the rock inscriptions are in Tamil showing that the local popular language or vernacular was definitely Tamil.

The occurrence of a large number of Prakrit names, in their original form or in the adapted form, certainly vouch for a considerable presence of immigrant Prakrit-speaking people in particular sites. A majority of them appear to have come from the northern parts of India as implied by the wide use of the dental sibilant (*s*). Some people hailed from Sri Lanka, also implied from the use of the palatal *ś* that was substituted there for the dental *s* in the earliest stage. The purpose of the travel of these people over such long distances could only be trade. Sites like Kodumanal, Arikamedu, and Alagankulam are certainly not religious centres. These sites are known as crafts and commercial centres, the latter two being port towns too. Uraiyur, Karur, Madurai, and Kanchipuram could also have been natural centres of exchange as they were important political centres. Names such as Kuviran, from Kubēra, the god of riches, and Cātaṉ, and the term *nikama* (same as *nigama* 'guild') certainly vouch for the presence of merchants.

We can assert from the above information that Prakrit-speaking merchants must have been instrumental in the beginning in introducing the Brahmi script into the Tamil country. This must have happened soon after the Brahmi script in its full form was available in the Magadha region during the Mauryan rule, early in the third century BCE. Long-distance trade circuits might have become more intensified under the Mauryan rule that brought a major part of India under its jurisdiction. The spread of the knowledge of writing through the traders is an important consequence of this development. As the Tamil merchants first acquired this knowledge from Prakrit-speaking merchants, the Tamil language in the pottery inscriptions, which represent the first stage of written Tamil, is naturally influenced by Prakrit as far as orthography is concerned. This Prakrit impact is more or less the same as that found in the rock inscriptions (Mahadevan 2003: 225–31). Features such as the occasional inconsistency in differentiating the short and long medial *a*, the non-occurrence of separate symbols to differentiate *e* from *ē* and *o* from *ō*, and the limited use of gemination, besides the large proportion of pure Prakrit names themselves, may be attributed to the Prakrit-speaking merchants among the local community. At the same time, some difference that is noticed between the Tamil language of the pottery inscriptions and that of the rock inscriptions, even though they are contemporaneous could be due to the involvement of literate Jain monks in the latter, while in the former it is the merchants' *lingua franca*.

It is highly likely that mostly Jain monks followed trading groups to the Tamil country. Unlike in Sri Lanka and coastal Andhra Pradesh, there is very little evidence to infer the early presence of the Buddhist monks in this company. The absence of any mention of the term *sangha* in the rock inscriptions is clinching evidence to exclude Buddhists from the rock inscriptions. In any case, unlike the rock inscriptions, the pottery inscriptions do not reveal any evidence of the religious groups in the excavated material. That may suggest that in the early stage, that is, during the third to first centuries BCE, Jain monks were limited in number and lived near important political and cultural centres. A large number of them are found particularly near Madurai, the capital of the Pandyan rulers. The concentration of the Tamil poets of the Sangam anthologies in



a

b

Figure 1.18 Pottery with Tamil-Brahmi Inscription
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

and around Madurai may be due to the early settling of the Jain monks in this area, as the spread of formal literacy must be attributed to the Jain monks rather than to the merchants.

Finally, there remains the question as to why the Kannada and Telugu languages are not found in the Brahmi inscriptions of Karnataka and Andhra respectively, unlike Tamil. Both Kannada and Telugu are found in inscriptions only from the fifth and sixth centuries CE. Two reasons may be suggested for this phenomenon: one, the elites there who came under the direct influence of the Mauryan rule preferred the Prakrit language of the masters instead of their own mother tongue, and two, the Buddhists who were in considerable number in both the areas did not care about the local language, unlike the Jains. A similar situation can be seen in Sri Lanka too, where all the thousand and odd rock-shelter inscriptions, all relating to the Buddhist milieu, appear only in Prakrit.

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CHAPTER 2

First Century BCE to Fifth Century CE

The Satavahanas, the Early Tamil Polities, and Their Successors

2.1 THE SATAVAHANAS IN THE DECCAN

Y. SUBBARAYALU

The Satavahanas were the first ruling dynasty of the Dekhan (Deccan). They are considered to have set the norms for most of the subsequent political and socio-cultural developments in south India. During the last few decades, much new information has become available through archaeological and numismatic discoveries to understand Satavahana history. However, there still remains some difference of opinion as to the chronology and the original homeland of the Satavahanas. The *Purāṇas* assert that this dynasty of Andhras (otherwise called Āndhra-bhrityas) succeeded the Kanvas in about the middle of the first century BCE and ruled the region from the city of Pratishṭhāna. However, they are not unanimous as to the number of kings this dynasty had or the number of years they ruled. The number of kings ranges from 17 to 30 and the total number of years they ruled from 300 to 400 years. Coupled with this difference in Puranic evidence, there is also no unanimity of opinion regarding the dating of some of the early inscriptions of these rulers on palaeographical grounds. Hence, broadly speaking, there are two views about the chronology as shown in the Table 2.1: one, tracing their rule from about 230 BCE, and the other from the latter half of the first century BCE. Currently, the shorter chronology is preferred as it is, to a great extent, supported by the numismatic evidence obtained from excavations at Kotalingala and other sites in central Deccan (Sastry 1999).

The same numismatic evidence also seems to support the view that the original rule of the Satavahanas started in the Telangana area of Andhra Pradesh, that is in the central Deccan, and soon spread over to the western Deccan, wherein is located the early capital Pratishṭhāna (modern Paithan, Aurangabad district) on the north bank of the Godavari. After the first three rulers, there is an apparent gap as far as the inscriptional evidence is concerned until we reach the reign of Gautamiputra Satakarni assigned to the beginning of the second century CE even though the *Purāṇas* mention several names in between. A few of them are otherwise known from coins, and the one called Hala is

Table 2.1 Table Showing Three Views of the Satavahana Chronology

Kings	I	II	III
Simuka (Chimuka)	230 BCE	c. 30 BCE	53–30 BCE
Krishna	207–189 BCE	?	29–12 BCE
Satakarni I			12 BCE–44 CE
[A gap—Apilaka, Hala]			
Gautamiputra Satakarni	80–104 CE	106–30 CE	61–90 CE
Vasishthiputra Pulumavi I	105–28 CE	130–59 CE	91–118 CE
Vasishthiputra Sivasri Satakarni		159–66 CE	
Sivaskanda Satakarni		167–74 CE	156–70 CE
Gautamiputra Yajna(sri) Satakarni	170–99 CE	174–203 CE	171–99 CE
Gautamiputra Vijaya			200–205 CE
Chandrasri			206–15 CE
VasishthiputraPulumavi			226–32 CE

Source: I. Sastri (1966: 92–6); II. Sircar (1951); III. Shastri (1999: 35).

famous as the author of the *Sattasāi*, a literary work in Maharashtri Prakrit. It was during the time of Gautamiputra Satakarni, and his son, Vasishthiputra Pulumavi, that the kingdom acquired its widest extent, reaching the Krishna–Godavari delta and including some parts south of the Krishna as well. The last great ruler was Gautamiputra Yajna Satakarni in the last quarter of the second century who ruled both the western and eastern parts. A couple of decades later, the Satavahana rule was displaced by that of the Ikshvakus in the east, by the Saka Kshatrapa rulers in the west, and by a number of local chiefs elsewhere.

While the Satavahana dynasty was on the rise in central and western Deccan, another ruling family called Chedi became politically active in Kalinga in central Orissa. The political accomplishments and welfare activities of Kharavela, the third and most prominent successor of this house, are known from an inscription at Hathigumpha near Bhubaneswar. He is said to have sent his army into the country of Satakarni in the west but no further information is available about this encounter. It is believed that this Satakarni may have been the third Satavahana king. Kharavela's territory along the coast appears to have extended up to the Krishna delta; some rulers with the 'Sada' designation known through their coins in coastal Andhra are considered to be the successors of Kharavela (Mangalam 1999).

Satakarni, the third ruler mentioned in the table (perhaps a contemporary of Kharavela), with claims to being a great warrior, is said to have performed, accompanied by his wife, Naganika, a number of Vedic sacrifices, including the prestigious *aśvamēdha* sacrifice and distributed very lavish gifts such as cows, horses, elephants, and silver coins (*karshāpaṇa*) to Brahmana priests. Subsequent to his reign, we do not get any inscriptions for about four decades until the time of Gautamiputra Satakarni. This king had to face the challenge of the powerful Nahapana, the Kshaharata kshatrapa subordinate of the Kushanas, who was encroaching on the Konkan coast. About 124 CE, he seems to have utterly routed Nahapana and counterstruck a large number of the latter's silver coins to celebrate the victory. He is said to have extirpated the family of Kshaharatas, destroyed the Sakas, Yavanas, and Pahlavas, and restored the glory of the Satavahana family. He is praised as the overlord of several traditional regions like Rishika, Asmaka, Mulaka, Surashtra, Kukura, Aparanta, Anupa, Vidarbha, Akara, and Avanti, which would comprise the western and central Deccan and some adjoining parts north of the Vindhya hills. An interesting epithet is given to him in his Nasik inscription: *ēkabamhaṇasa*, which is interpreted either as 'the only Brahmana', or as 'the only protector of the Brahmanas'. It was only during the reign of Vasishthiputra Pulumavi, son and successor of Gautamiputra Satakarni, that eastern Deccan, that is, the Krishna–Guntur region, became part of the Satavahana kingdom. Gautamiputra Yajnasri, or simply Yajna Satakarni, was the last powerful ruler of this family whose inscriptions and coins are found both in Maharashtra and Andhra. The next king, Satakarni, is said to have married the daughter of Mahakshatrapa Rudradaman.

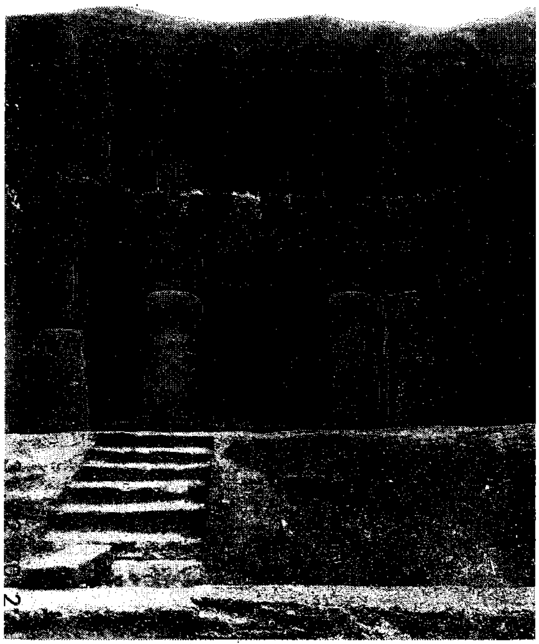

Figure 2.1 Buddhist Cave at Kanheri
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

The main Satavahana house is not heard of after the first quarter of the third century, but there were a few minor branches in northern Karnataka (Kuntala), southern Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh, as confirmed by a few inscriptions and a number of coin finds. Sālavāhana, or Sālivāhana, the latter variant of Sātavāhana, becomes in course of time associated more often as the additional name or attribute of the Saka era.

The Satavahana period is important for the following reasons: For the first time a big state covering the entire extent of the Deccan was established, even if briefly. During the process of its expansion, a number of pre-Satavahana tribal chiefdoms seems to have been

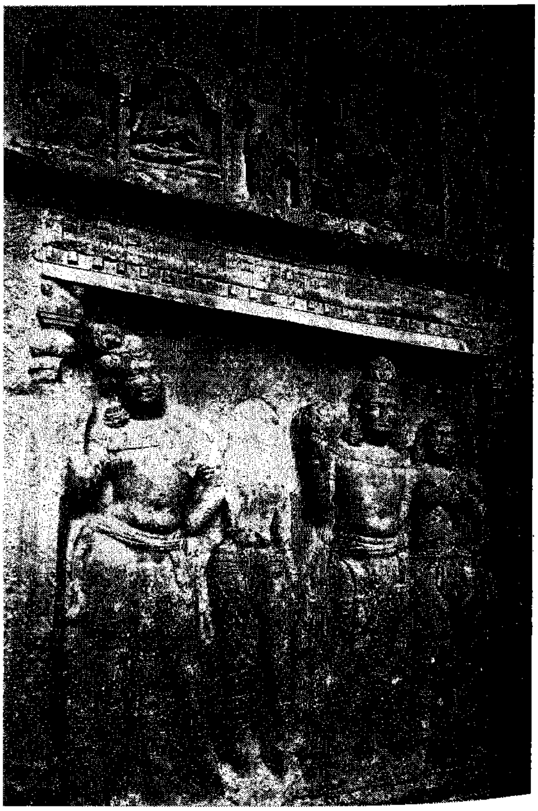

Figure 2.2 Sculpture at Buddhist Cave at Kanheri
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

subordinated to the Satavahana rule by force as well as by marital ties. It may be said that the growth of the Satavahana state was also dependent to a great extent on the growth of trade, both internal and maritime. This was a period of brisk Indo-Roman trade. Archaeological discoveries in various parts of the Deccan include, conspicuously, coins of the post-punch-marked stage, mostly of base metal (lead, copper, and potin), with or without Brahmi legends. In the western Deccan, particularly in the coastal sites, the Saka Kshatrapa coins were issued in silver. These coins seem to have encouraged the later Satavahana rulers in the first and second centuries CE to issue their own portrait coins in silver, with bilingual legends. Several hundred rock-cut caves found excavated in the outcrops of the Western Ghats and dedicated mainly to the Buddhist *sangha* from the first century BCE onwards bear evidence that they were situated on trade routes linking the interior to the coastal ports of the Konkan area. The Buddhist caves were mostly supported by caravan traders, besides royalty. Some of the caves at Nasik, Kanheri, and Karle (Figures 2.1 and 2.2) bear several Satavahana inscriptions corroborating their patronage of the Buddhist faith. Of course, the Satavahana family was also influenced to some extent by the ideals of the Vedas and the *dharmaśāstra*, which paved the way for further percolation of this influence in most parts of south India.

2.2 SANGAM AND POST-SANGAM LITERATURE

Y. SUBBARAYALU

2.2.1 Sangam Literature (c. 100 BCE to 300 CE)

The earliest Tamil literature, usually called Sangam literature,[1] is considered the most useful source for understanding the early stages in the history of Tamil Nadu, besides written evidence in the form of mariners' accounts in Greek and Latin, Buddhist literature in Pali from Sri Lanka and a few Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions. There is a literary tradition from about the eighth century (first recorded in a grammatical commentary called *Kaḷaviyal-urai*) that attributes this literature to an academy of poets called the 'Sangam' (or Chankam) under the patronage of the Pandya kings. This academy of Tamil poets is considered the third of its kind; the earlier two are located in two other southern cities that are believed to have been destroyed by deluges. Though most of the tradition relating to the two earlier academies seems apocryphal, there appears to be some historical basis for the third one as the number (449) of poets said to be associated with that body almost tallies with the number of poets (about 473) identified as authors of the available Sangam poems and as the names of the literary works that are mentioned as composed by those poets under the aegis of this academy are almost the same as the existing 'Sangam' anthologies. Most of the works of these poets were 'discovered' at the end of the nineteenth century.[2]

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[1] In earlier studies, the period when the poems were composed is usually called the Sangam Age. This is now considered a misnomer as the Sangam or academy, had it existed, would be related only to the time of compilation and anthology-making and not to the time of composition. The name *Sangam* is used here only as a convenient label for denoting the entire corpus of early Tamil poetry, without implying a 'Sangam Age'.

[2] The poems mentioned in the legend were once thought to have been lost or non-existent, but their texts in the form of palm-leaves were discovered by Damodaran Pillai and Swaminatha Iyer towards the end of the nineteenth century.

The main body of Sangam literature comprises eight anthologies (*eṭṭu-tokai*) of shorter poems and ten long songs or lays (*pattu-pāṭṭu*).[3] This corpus includes texts of nearly 2,400 poems of lengths ranging from three lines to eight hundred lines composed by about 473 poets. Composed and sung in praise of kings and chiefs by wandering bardic poets, this is considered heroic court poetry. Some scholars believe that these poems were mostly oral in nature until they were compiled (Kailasapathy 1968). Though the oral basis of the poetry has been conceded, it is now considered that the poems in the existing anthologies were composed mostly by literate poets known as *pulavar*, using oral bardic conventions that had been practised earlier by traditional bards known as *pāṇar*. Geographically, the poets seem to have been concentrated in the southern part of Tamil Nadu, though some of them are from other parts of the old Tamiḻagam, including present-day Kerala and from the Jaffna area of Sri Lanka.

The poems are classified into two broad categories on the basis of the primary themes they deal with, namely *akam* or 'interior' themes (love and family life) and *puṟam* or 'exterior', that is, worldly (martial and panegyric) themes. Five of the anthologies (*Akanānūṟu*, *Kuṟuntokai*, *Naṟṟiṇai*, *Aiṅkuṟunūṟu*, *Kalittokai*) and three of the long poems (*Neḍunalvāḍai*, *Mullaippāṭṭtu*, and *Kuṟiñjippāṭṭu*) deal with the *akam* and the others with the *puṟam* themes. The *Paripāṭal* is a mixed work, more religious in nature, praising the deities Murugan and Vishnu (or Tirumal) and the Vaigai River flowing near Madurai town. Besides these anthologies, there is the *Tolkāppiyam*, a grammatical work that seems to have been finalized closely following the anthologies and hence is considered part of the same epoch. It is from the poetics part of this grammatical treatise that we get explicit and detailed information about the codified rules and conventions of the two major themes (Marr, 1985: 14–68). Of course, there is also some internal evidence in the poems themselves on these matters.

Scholars have suggested relative as well as absolute chronology for the anthologies on the basis of internal evidence, style, and prosody. The reference in these works to the visit of the Yavanas to the coastal towns for trading purposes is supported by archaeological evidence in the form of Roman coins and Arretine pottery and amphorae. Some contemporaneous accounts of mariners and geographers, like those of Pliny the Elder, *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, Ptolemy, and a contemporary papyrus document (Casson, 1990: 195–206) written in Greek directly attest to the Greek presence at Muziris (or Muchiri) on the Kerala coast. As the most active period of the Roman trade was the first two centuries CE and as the literary references are actually eyewitness accounts of this trade, there can be no dispute in assigning the bulk of the Sangam poems to the first two centuries CE. Some of the Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions, discussed in section 2.3, would, however, support the fact that some of the poems might go back to the second or first centuries BCE. Recently, four primitive hero-stones with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions, datable to circa second or first centuries BCE were discovered in the upper part of the Vaigai valley (Rajan and Yatheeskumar 2007). This is a significant discovery as it corroborates, for the first time, the historicity of the hero-stone tradition described in the Sangam Tamil literature in the context of cattle raids and indirectly supports the possibility of some Sangam poems belonging to the early first century BCE or a little earlier.

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[3] The best and latest synthesis of all the earlier writings on various aspects of this literature may be found in Zvelebil 1975.

The remarkable feature of the *akam* poems is the use of natural geographical ecotypes, called *tiṇai*, as their backdrop, to depict the varying moods of lovers and spouses in their day-to-day life. The five *tiṇai*s associated with the *akam* themes are called *kuṟiñji*, *mullai*, *marutam*, *neytal*, and *pālai*. Each of them was named after a flower that is typical of the respective geographic region: *kuriñji* (*Strobilanthes kunthianus*) for the hilly region, *mullai* (*Jasmininum sambac*/*trichotomum*) for the forest and sub-montane region, *marutam* (*Terminalia arjuna*) for the fertile riverine region, *neytal* (*Nymphaea lotus alba*) for the coastal region, and *pālai* (*Alstonia scholaris*) for the arid region. The *puṟam* type uses a different, parallel *tiṇai* classification, but without reference to geographical locations and ecotypes similar to those of the *akam* type. Instead, war themes, denoted by the symbolism of flowers are taken as the basis of that classification.

The poets graphically describe the flora, fauna, the people, their cultural equipment, economic activities, and so on, peculiar to each of the five eco-regions. Medieval commentators as well as modern historians generally treated these descriptions as just poetic conventions without giving much importance to their sociological and economic information. Actually they provide realistic and sensitive pictures of the different localities and associated human behaviour, and much useful information to help us understand the society and culture of the period. Some recent studies (Sivathamby 1974, Gurukkal 2010: 77–94, 136–54) have clearly established the fact that each of the eco-regions concerned had a peculiar form of economic activity for subsistence: hunting and gathering in *kuṟiñji*; pastoral activity combined with rudimentary forms of cultivation in the *mullai* region; agriculture using irrigation and the plough in *marutam*; fishing, salt-making, and maritime activities in *neytal*. *Palai*, unlike the other eco-regions, was considered a seasonally parched eco-zone, unsuitable for any kind of cultivation and hence gave rise to cattle-lifting and waylaying. Of course, the eco-regions were not treated as strictly compartmentalized as by nature they formed a continuum and there were several zones of contact and overlap (denoted by the term *tiṇai-mayakkam*) with a mixed type of economic activities. These studies have also stressed the uneven socio-economic development in the different ecotypes of the day, giving us glimpses of the corresponding political organization.

There are three components in the making of the Sangam corpus: (*a*) the texts of the poems as composed by the bards according to the poetical conventions of the day, (*b*) the colophons or footnotes added to the individual poems at a later point in time by the compiler or anthologist, and (*c*) the commentaries. The estimate of the time interval between each of these three components, particularly between the first two, is a difficult task and scholars differ widely on this point. Excluding the extreme standpoints, the present, generally accepted view is that the majority of the poems were composed during the first two or three centuries CE and that the original anthologies were completed by the fifth century CE. There is, however, evidence to suggest continuous redaction and re-editing of the original anthologies until a few centuries later.

The importance of the colophons that are found attached to the poems should be stressed here. It is the colophons that give the names of the composers and the sub-theme of the poems concerned and, in the case of the *puṟam* poems, provide additional information relating to the names of the patrons (chiefs/kings) and events associated with them. Although there may be errors in the recording of the colophon information in several cases due to the time-lag between the composition of the poems and their collection, the genuineness of the colophon tradition cannot be doubted. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri (1932) has established this beyond doubt through a critical study of all the poems pertaining to Karikāla. And the historical and political picture reconstructed on the basis of the colophons is corroborated by some solid external evidence, as may be seen in subsequent sections.

There are two opposing views regarding the impact of Sanskritic or northern ideas on Sangam literature. Nilakanta Sastri, the proponent of Sanskrit dominance, thought that early Tamil literature was already fully charged with words, conceptions, and institutions of Sanskritic and northern origin and that Sanskrit was the magic wand whose touch alone raised Tamil and other Dravidian languages from the patois to the literary level. The other, Tamil purist, view is that the Tamil literary tradition has a hoary antiquity unsullied by Sanskritic culture. Recent, more sober studies, have identified the nature of the pre-Sanskritic tradition in the south, particularly that of the early Tamil literature vis-à-vis the northern tradition. They stress that the prosody of early Tamil poetry is entirely original, and has nothing in common with the Sanskrit type of metrics (Zvelebil, 1975: 99, Hart, 1999: 197–210). Further, on analysing all the poetic conventions, themes, and so on, found in Prakrit (*Sattasāi*) and Tamil works, these studies underline the fact that Tamil poetry, which has close parallels in the Maharashtri Prakrit tradition, precedes and is a forerunner of the great Sanskrit *kāvya* literature authored by Kalidasa and others. The obvious conclusion is that both early Tamil and Prakrit poetry appear to be refined developments of a common, popular, pre-Aryan oral tradition that must have flourished in the first millennium BCE in the Deccan, the meeting ground of the northern and southern cultures (Zvelebil, 1975: 99, Hart, 1999: 197–210).

2.2.2 Post-Sangam Literature (c. 300–600 CE)

The so-called Eighteen Minor Works (called *kīḻkkaṇakku*) and the two epics (*kāvya*), the *Silappatikāram* and the *Maṇimēkalai*, are included in the period between the fourth and sixth centuries CE. By themes, prosody, and diction, there are marked differences between these works and the Sangam literature noted above and hence they cannot be put in the same time bracket as has been done in some earlier studies.[4] The eighteen works contain mostly ethical or didactic poetry. They are written in the *veṇpā* metre containing two or four lines. The most popular among them, the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* and the *Nālaḍiyār*, were both written by poets of Jain leanings. There are four other Jain poems. A poem by the name *Āchārakkōvai* belongs to the Brahmanical school and is a digest of ideas from the *dharmasastras*. Four other poems talk about popular ethical ideas and proverbs. The remaining seven poems follow the earlier tradition of war and love poetry, though in a less vibrant form. Among the *kāvya* works, the *Silappatikāram* is rated as a beautiful *kāvya*; it was written by a Jain author, Ilangovadigal, supposed to be a Chera prince. The other early *kāvya*, the *Manimēkalai*, is by a Buddhist poet and has incorporated many stories taken from the Buddhist *jātaka* literature. Unlike the *Silappatikāram*, the *Maṇimēkalai* is quite outspoken in religious propagation and underlines the fact that there were lots of polemical disputes and discussions developing among adherents of rival religions. Both works, generally assigned to the fifth and sixth centuries CE, are long, continuous narratives in the form of dramatic epics. Both the ethical and *kāvya* works reflect a transitional stage in the social, cultural, and political organization from the time of the Sangam literature to that of the Pallavas, as known from inscriptions and *bhakti* literature. There is a marked increase of the *dharmasastra* influence on these literary works. The *varnāśrama* concept is explicitly, and approvingly, mentioned. At the same time, heterodox ideas gained ascendancy and popularity.

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[4] For instance, Subramanian (1966) clubs these works with the earlier anthologies in the treatment of 'Sangam Polity' and thereby makes it difficult to understand the remarkable changes in the socio-economic formation over the six or seven centuries.

Among the group of the eighteen works, the *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, considered to be a book of lofty wisdom, is an outstanding work. The author, Tiruvaḷḷuvar, though a Jain by belief, has presented his ideas in a non-partisan way so that each religious group has claimed him as their own. There are three sections in the work: *aṟam*, *poruḷ*, and *inbam* (or *kāmam*), somewhat reflecting the northern *dharma-artha-kāma* concept. Actually, in the third section, he closely follows the earlier bardic *akam* tradition. In the first section he talks not only about man's private moral life, but also his relationships with and responsibilities towards elders, society, king, and state. In the second section, he reflects on the empirical and pragmatic ideas of the *arthasastra* tradition of the north but, unlike Kautalya, he mostly dwells on the benign aspects such as friendship, kindness, and justice. Tiruvaḷḷuvar despised tyrannical rule. Obviously, his materialistic ideas were tempered with the moral ideas of Jainism.

2.3 EARLY TAMIL POLITY

Y. SUBBARAYALU

2.3.1 The Rulers

In section 2.3 we saw that the antiquity of the ruling families of the Tamil country can be traced to the third century BCE. Greek and Latin accounts of the first and second centuries CE refer to some ports and ruling families of Lymyrike (or Damirice),[5] the same as Tamiḻakam of Tamil sources, which then comprised the area of the present-day states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu (see Map 2.1). Pliny (the Elder) and the author of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* refer to the Chera ruler of Kerala and the Pandyan king of Madurai in general terms in the latter half of the first century CE. Ptolemy (c. 140 CE) mentions additionally the territory of the Ay chief of the southern Kerala. There are also a few coins with Tamil-Brahmi legends, which give the names of the Pandya and Chera kings of the first century BCE and later (Mahadevan 2003: 57, 62–3). The above information, though disjointed, would suggest that there was some continuity as regards political power in Tamiḻakam from the third century BCE onwards. But it is mainly from the Sangam anthologies that we get more detailed information about the regional polity.

The nature of the literary information is such that no elaborate historical account of the times is possible in spite of some elaborate analytical studies of the material (Sivaraja Pillai 1932, Sastri 1932 and 1957, , Kailasapathy 1968,

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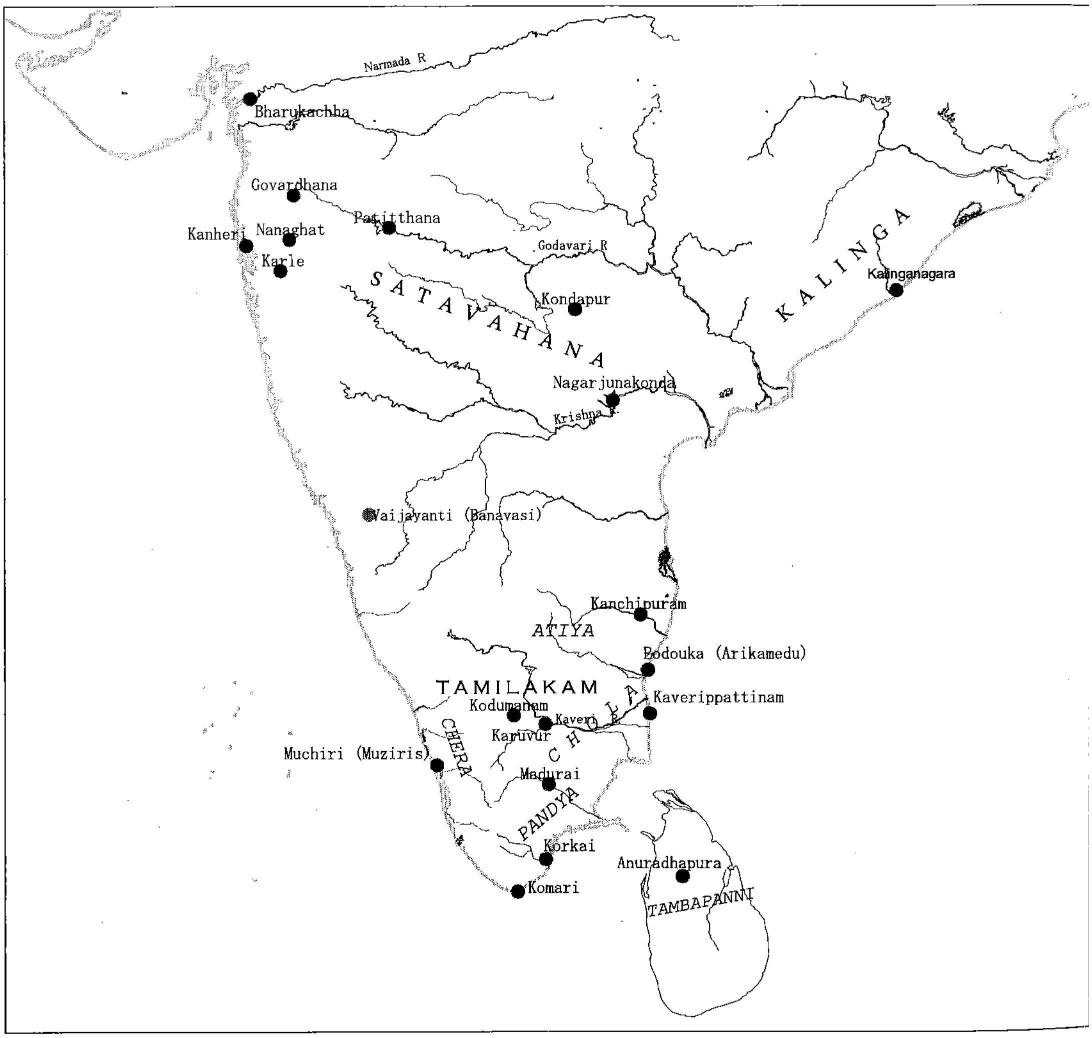
[5] Lymyrike and its later variants Dymirice, Dimirice, and Damirice definitely denoted Tamiḻakam as the coastal places mentioned therein like Tyndis, Naoura, Muziris, Bacare, and others are located on the Kerala and Tamil Nadu coasts (Romanis and Tcherinia 1997: 131ff).


Narmada R
Bharukachha
Govardhana
Kanheri
Nanaghat
Karle
Patitthana
Godavari R
SATAVAHANA
Kondapur
KALINGA
Kalinganagara
Nagarjunakonda
Krishna R.
Vaijayanti (Banavasi)
Kanchipuram
ATIYA
Podouka (Arikamedu)
TAMILAKAM
Kodumanam
Kaveri R.
Karuvur
CHOLA
Kaverippattinam
Muchiri (Muziris)
CHERA
Madurai
PANDYA
Korkai
Komari
Anuradhapura
TAMBAPANNI

Map 2.1 South India in First Century BCE to Third Century CE
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

and Marr 1985). The historical information is mostly anecdotal and fragmentary. As seen earlier, the information is culled mainly from the colophons to the *puram* genre of songs, with some complementary information from the texts of the poems themselves. It is estimated that these songs refer to about eighteen Chēra, twelve Chōḻa, and twelve Pāṇḍya kings (*vēntar*), and around forty-eight chieftains (*vēḷ*), besides a number of anonymous chiefs whose names are lost due to the fragmentary nature of some of the poems included in the later section of the *Puṟananūṟu*. Only about 20 per cent of the above kings and chiefs are found to be prominent figures, as may be deduced from the number of poets who sang about them. From the limited genealogical information found in the colophons to the *patiṟṟuppattu* and from the cross-linkages between the poets and patrons, Nilakanta Sastri (1957: 504–18) has

Table 2.2 Chronology of the Chēra, Chōḻa, Pāṇḍya, and Other Chiefs (130–230 CE)

Date CE	Chēra	Chōḻa	Pāṇḍya	Chiefs
130	Udiyan Chēral			
140	Anduvan			
155	Imayavaramban Neḍunchēral Ādan			
	Palyānai Chelkeḻukuṭṭuvan			
165	Chelvakkaḍuṅgō Vāḻi Ādan	Iḷanjēṭchenni		
180	Senguṭṭuvan		Palyāgasālai Mudukuḍumi Peruvaḻudi	
	Āḍukōṭpāṭṭu Chēṟal Ādan, Nārmuḍi Chēral			
190	Tagaḍūr-eṟinta Perunchēral Iṟumpoṟai	Karikāl		Adiyamān Neḍumān Anji
	Kuḍakkō Iḷanchēral Iṟumpoṟai			Toṇḍaimān Iḷantiraiyan
215	Yānaikaṭchēy Māndaran Chēral Irumpoṟai		Talaiyālaṅgānam Neḍuncheḻyan	
235				Ōymān Nalliyakkōḍan

Source: Sastri (1957: 504–18).

constructed a chronology of five or six generations that falls between 130 CE and 230 CE.[6]

In order to fix the dates, Nilakanta Sastri took as a reliable sheet anchor the contemporaneity of the Chēra king, Senguṭṭuvan, and the Sri Lankan king, Gajabāhu (c. 173–95). This evidence is derived from the quasi-legendary accounts found in the *Silappatikāram* (c. fifth century CE) and relates to the folklore associated with the *pattini* goddess cult prevalent in Kerala and Sri Lanka and hence is not very reliable. There are, however, other pieces of evidence to broadly support this chronology. A couple of Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions of about the second century CE at Pugaḻūr near Karur refer to the names of three Chēra kings (see Figure 2.3), who are more or less identified with the last three rulers mentioned in the *Patiṟṟupattu* (Mahadevan 2003: 117). It may be noticed that Table 2.2 gives the maximum importance to the Chera rulers as it is mainly based on the genealogical information in the *Patiṟṟuppattu.* For the Chola and Pandya families, such information is lacking. Therefore this table can only be tentative, as several other rulers mentioned in the literature could not be accommodated here in their proper places. In the case of the chiefs it is still more difficult as they are mentioned only in one or two poems and without any useful information to include them in the table. It is possible that some of the persons who are not accommodated here belonged to first century BCE or earlier. The Pandya names found in the Tamil-Brāhmi inscriptions of Māngulam, assigned to the third and second centuries BCE, certainly predated this table. And several names that do not figure in the chronological table might have belonged to the post-230 CE period too.

A fair understanding of the nature of the political structure can be obtained by a close look at the information available for each of the three big ruling families. A striking fact about these families is that there was more than one branch ruling simultaneously and contending for leadership. It may be recalled here that Asoka refers to his Chola and Pandya contemporaries in the plural. The *Patiṟṟupattu* gives clear evidence that there were at least two Chera (Cheral is the correct form) families dominating the central part of Kerala and the adjoining Kongu area. They had two political centres, one at Muchiri-Karur on the coast and the other at Karuvur, the present-day Karur in Karur district on the north bank of the Amaravati River in Tamil Nadu. As for their political activities, Imayavarampan Neḍuncheralātan is said to have conquered an island, which had the *kaḍambu* tree as its guardian tree, by crossing the sea. He is also credited with exacting a heavy ransom after punishing the Yavanas, perhaps the Greek and Roman mariners. His brother, Chelkeḻukuṭṭuvan, acquired more territory by conquering the Kongu (western part of Tamil Nadu up to Karur). Nārmuḍicheral fought with Nannan of the Tuḷu country, whose capital also had the *kaḍambu* tree as its tutelary tree. He is praised for having performed his coronation ceremony using water from both the western and eastern seas brought by a relay of elephants. Some military achievements of Chenkuttuvan, another son, are described in the *Patiṟṟupattu* but not in as exaggerated a manner as in the *Silappatikāram*. The latter work describes him as a great warrior having undertaken an expedition to north India to get the right stone from the Himalayas to sculpt the image of the *pattini* goddess. Āḍukōṭpāṭṭu Cheralātan is said to have fought along with others against the Chōḻa king Karikāl at the battle of Veṇṇi in east Thanjavur.

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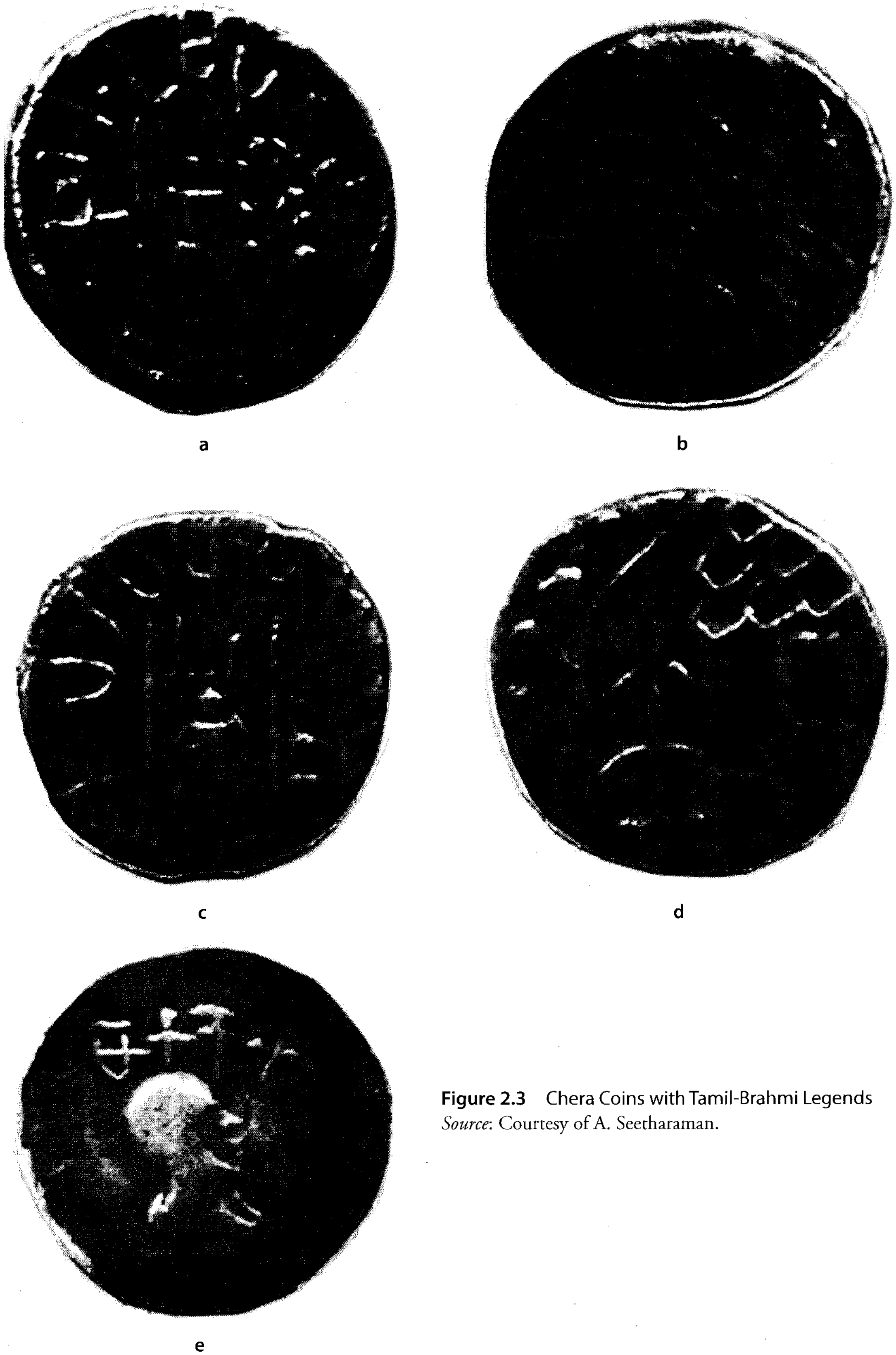
[6] K.N. Sivaraja Pillai (1932), however, would put them within some ten generations.

The collateral branch of the Cheras, with the clan name Poṟai, represented by Anduvan, Chelvakkaḍuṅgō Āḻiyādan, and others, was more active in the Kongu area with Karur as its capital. Three members of this family are mentioned in the Pugaḻūr inscriptions. Chelvakkaḍungō Āḻiyātan is praised for his possession of two important towns, namely Pandar and Koḍumaṇam, that were famous respectively for pearls and precious stones. Pandar may be the same as the medieval port Fandarina and the present-day Pandalāyini-Kollam north of Kozhikode, and Koḍumaṇam is to be identified very plausibly with Koḍumaṇal in Erode district, where archaeological studies have brought to light evidence of a flourishing gemstone crafts centre (Rajan 1991). The next king, Perunchēral Irumpoṟai, who routed Adigamān of Tagaḍūr and fought with a shepherd chief called Kaḻuvuḷ, is praised as the lord of Pukār (the Chōḻa capital) and the lord of Kolli (the hills).

The Chōḻa family had two political centres, one at Uṟaiyūr (Tiruchirāppaḷḷi) in the interior and the other at Pukār or Kāvirippaṭṭinam, the famous port town on the east coast. This family also had at least two parallel lines ruling simultaneously. Several poems refer to succession disputes and quarrels among brothers, which at times were settled by the mediation of poets. It is, however, difficult to reconstruct a genealogy for the Chola family like that of the Chera. It is only for Karikāl, son of Iḷanjēṭchenni, that some connected account is available from the *Paṭṭinappālai* and other verses. Faced with severe hurdles in his youth, he is said to have escaped from prison through daring feats to obtain his rightful throne. Subsequently, he routed a big confederacy of enemies comprising many kings and *vēḷ* chiefs at the battle of Veṇṇi and again fought nine *vēḷ* chiefs in another battle. His crowning achievements, graphically narrated in the *Paṭṭinappālai*, show that there was expansion of the territory towards the north up to the south Pennār. In his time, Kavirippattinam was a flourishing port full



a

b

c

d

e

Figure 2.3 Chera Coins with Tamil-Brahmi Legends
Source: Courtesy of A. Seetharaman.

of merchandise and foreign traders, under the administrative control of the government. Karikāl is also given the credit for reclaiming forest land and bringing it under cultivation by excavating new tanks. His greatest achievement, of course, was raising the flood banks of the Kaveri, a feat that was remembered for long and around which some interesting mythology accumulated in later centuries.[7]

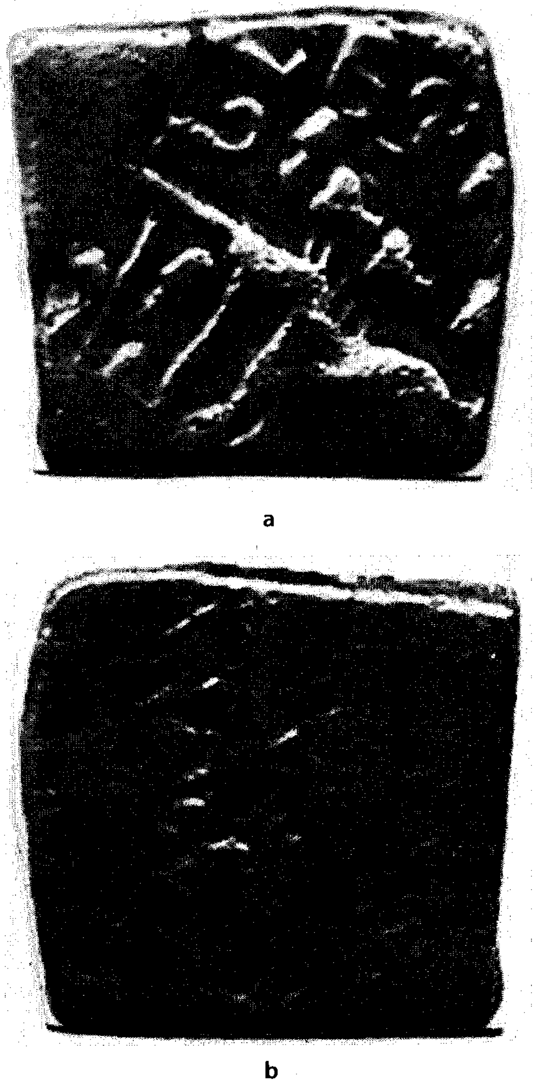


Figure 2.4 Coin of the Pandya King Peruvaḻudi
Source: Courtesy of A. Seetharaman.

For the Pandyas too, there is no connected genealogy. Though there are names of several rulers in poems, only two rulers stand out prominently. One is Palyāgasālai-Mudukuḍumi-Peruvaḻudi and the other is Neḍuncheḻiyan, 'the victor of Talaiyālangānam', both mentioned in the long poem, *Maduraikkānji*. They may be separated by one or two generations. The former king Peruvaḻudi was remembered in copperplates issued in the eighth–ninth centuries for his patronage of Brahmanas (see Figure 2.4). In the contemporary poems too, he is praised for his performance of several Vedic sacrifices, which is why he took the attribute *pal-yāga-sālai*, '(patron) of many sacrificial halls'. The second king, Neḍuncheḻiyan, is said to have faced a hostile combination of enemies soon after his accession, which led to the famous battle at Talaiyālangānam (in east Thanjavur). There, he fought successfully with a group of seven enemies, Chera, Chola, Titiyan, Eḻini, Erumaiyūran, Irungovēṇmān, and Porunan. Another important achievement of this king was the capture of Miḻalai and Muttūṟu, two important *vēḷ* centres along the coast in Pudukkottai district. He is also praised as the lord of Korkai, a flourishing port at the mouth of the Tambraparni, and as the overlord of the southern Paratavar, an important fisherman-cum-martial tribe of the southeast coast.

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[7] The earliest inscriptional reference to the taming of the Kaveri by raising flood banks is found in a seventh-century copper-plate grant of the Telugu-Chola ruler Punyakumara (*EI*, xxvii, pp. 246–8). The raising of these flood banks by Karikāla has been somehow mistaken for the building of a big stone dam called Kallaṇai (Grand Anicut in English) across the Kaveri. Anicuts across the Kaveri seem to have been built very late (see section 4.3). References found in some Sinhala works like the thirteenth-century *Pūjāvaliya* and other subsequent works (*Rājāvaliya*, and so on) mention a Chola king Karikāla (supposed to be a contemporary of the Sri Lankan ruler Gajabahu) who took a large number of captives from Sri Lanka to raise the banks of the Kaveri, but this is not corroborated by any other contemporary Sri Lankan chronicle or Tamil evidence (Sastri 1932: 67; Indrapala 2005: 269–70).

In the foregoing account of the three kingly families, the chiefs called *vēḷ* (*vēḷir* is the plural form) figure generally among the opponents of the kings. Although separate, detailed accounts of these chiefs is not possible, we can say that each had a small territory to rule and tried to keep it intact from the encroachment of the other chiefs as well as of the three kings. A few of them like Adigaman, Pāri, Āy, Evvi, and Irungō commanded a big area rich in natural resources and had considerable military power too, which naturally attracted the attention of the kings. There were frequent feuds among these chiefs themselves on account of cattle thefts. It seems that on many occasions several of them came together to oppose one or other of the three kings. We hear about the kings facing a combination of *vēḷir*, ranging from five to eleven, in major battles. Interestingly, the *vēḷ* families—at least some of them—claimed a hoary antiquity (*tol-kuḍi*) for their clans.

2.3.2 Political Organization

While generally in the earlier studies the polity, as gleaned from early Tamil literature, is characterized as a state polity under a monarchical form of government, a few recent studies lay stress on a pre-state polity dominated by tribal chiefdoms (Gurukkal 2010). The latter argument is based on the following premises: (*a*) the society does not show adequate stratified relations; (*b*) a proper territorial sense is lacking; (*c*) though there was a role for agriculture in the economy, it could not thrive under the conditions of continuous predatory warfare, leaving little scope for surplus produce; (*d*) there is no semblance of taxation or of government as found in the contemporary northern kingdoms, say the Satavahana kingdom of the Deccan; and (*e*) trade in the interiors and that carried on through sea ports did not play a major role in the economy as they mostly dealt with prestige goods catering to elite sections of the society. None of these factors were conducive to the several tribal chiefdoms (including the *vēntar*) of the day becoming viable kingdoms.

A comparative study of the elite groups that we come across in different eco-zones, however, points to some definite hierarchical relations among them. Among the three prominent ruling groups, the *vēntar*, who are usually considered kings,[8] take the first place followed by the *vēḷir* chiefs. Another term, *mannar*, is used in two senses, one, as a synonym of *vēntar*, and two, in the generic sense of ruler or chief. *Kiḻār* were still lower level chiefs. It is repeatedly mentioned that there were only three families or clans of *vēntar*, namely the Chera, the Pandya, and the Chola, whereas the *vēḷir* and *kiḻār* chiefs were numerous. The three *vēntar* were often referred to as the overlords of the entire Tamil region. The chiefs dotted hilly, semi-hilly, and to some extent, fertile pockets too. Each ruled over a small area; sometimes they were subordinate to the *vēntar* as warriors and captains.

Each *vēntar* commanded some conspicuous core fertile territories based in river valleys. For instance, the Cholas are praised as the lords of 'the fertile country watered by the Kāviri [Kaveri]'. Each of them had big towns as prominent political centres. Though the warfare waged by the *ventar* was in the nature of predatory raids in several instances, it also involved expanding their territorial base by taking the enemy's territories. A few Chera rulers have even been credited with undertaking naval warfare to punish pirates. There are references to organized military camps and army commanders (*ēnāti*), working for the kings and some officials called *kāviti*, known for their integrity and freedom from bias. The king's court is mentioned very often as *aṟam-kūṟuavaiyam*, 'the assembly where justice was meted out' but its composition is not clear.[9] Each of the three kingly clans is said to have some specific royal insignia comprising a flower, tutelary tree, drum, and umbrella, which were considered very sacred and to offer protection against attacks.

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[8] It has to be remembered here that the term *vēntar* is taken to denote only chiefs of some higher rank by scholars who argue for the non-existence of a state polity in the period under study (Gurukkal 2010).

In the economic sphere, there are clear hints that the kings took an interest in expanding wetland agriculture by bringing forests under cultivation and by building reservoirs. The efforts of the Chola king, Karikāla, to control the floods in the Kaveri by raising its banks and also his efforts to increase tank irrigation are well known. The fact that the brisk trade in the port town of Kāvirippaṭṭinam was taking place under official supervision shows that the Chola kings were eager to increase their revenue through sea trade as well. The Cheras and Pandyas also had within their territorial jurisdiction some flourishing port towns (Muchiri/Muziris and Korkai being the two premier ones) trading both with Rome and with Southeast Asia. The references to the Chera kings taking steps to control piracy in the western sea would also vouch for their keen interest in sea trade.

In some poems, kings have been exhorted to pursue mild and rational methods in collecting land tax as that would endear them to their people, and thereby manage to accumulate sufficient wealth through taxes and trade to govern their territories. There was, however, one glaring difference between the Tamil kingdoms and the contemporaneous Satavahana kingdom and that is in the use of money. While in the Deccan a large number of coins, issued both by the Satavahana kings and by a number of chiefly families, was in circulation, in the Tamil south its use was not so evident. The Tamil kings seem to have issued only a few coins, in a symbolic way, imitating punch-marked coins and Roman coins. It has to be surmised that gold bullion rather than coins was used in large transactions and as gifts to bards, poets, and Brahmanas. Barter was the norm in general transactions (Gurukkal 2010: 209).

One justification for the pre-state hypothesis is the nature of production relations. As most production relations of the times were supposedly based on kinship they did not and could not produce stratified relations in society. But this cannot be taken to be a general phenomenon, as in the wetland eco-zones we come across some differentiation among cultivators. Some terms to indicate servile groups, even slaves, are found there. Endemic warfare also would have created conditions for social disparities. War captives serving in some cult centres are mentioned. The royal practice of assigning or gifting villages to warriors following a victorious march seems to have preceded the practice

[9] Kanagasabhai (1904) and others following him have discussed elaborately and interpreted differently two categories of bodies, called *aimberunguḻu* ('the five great groups') and *eṇpērāyam* ('the eight great functionaries'), the members of whom are taken as forming the king's court and officials. These two bodies are mentioned only in the two epics, the *Silappatikāram* and the *Manimekalai*, of the later period and therefore it would be anachronistic to take them as representing the polity of the earlier centuries. Moreover, most of the interpretations are based on the meanings given by later glossators and are, as noted by Nilakanta Sastri (1955: 69–70), not backed by any reliable contemporary evidence.

of land gifts to Vedic Brahmana scholars. It is possible that such warrior villages became centres of non-kinship production relations. In the urban centres, though not many, there appears to have been quite a variety of craftsmen, indigenous as well as outsiders, leading to complex social and economic relations.

From the above information, a sort of state society can certainly be posited for the period of the bardic literature, though the evidence is of course too slender to make a more concrete statement.[10] The Tamil states can be compared to some extent with the Satavahana set-up. Recent critical studies would put the Satavahana state only as a modest one, as it was sharing the Deccan with several small chiefs (Chattopadhyaya 1987: 727–35). Its effective rule was confined to the western Deccan most of the time if we take into account the provenance of their inscriptions. Both the Satavahanas and the Tamil kings came under the spell of the Vedic and Sastraic culture; at the same time, they also patronized the heterodox faiths. Due to its proximity to the Mauryan state, the Satavahanas followed some features of the Mauryan administration like the *āhāra* territorial units whereas such an influence is not felt in the Tamil area. It is also to be noted that unlike the Satavahanas, the Tamil kings did not imbibe the *varṇāśrama* ideology.

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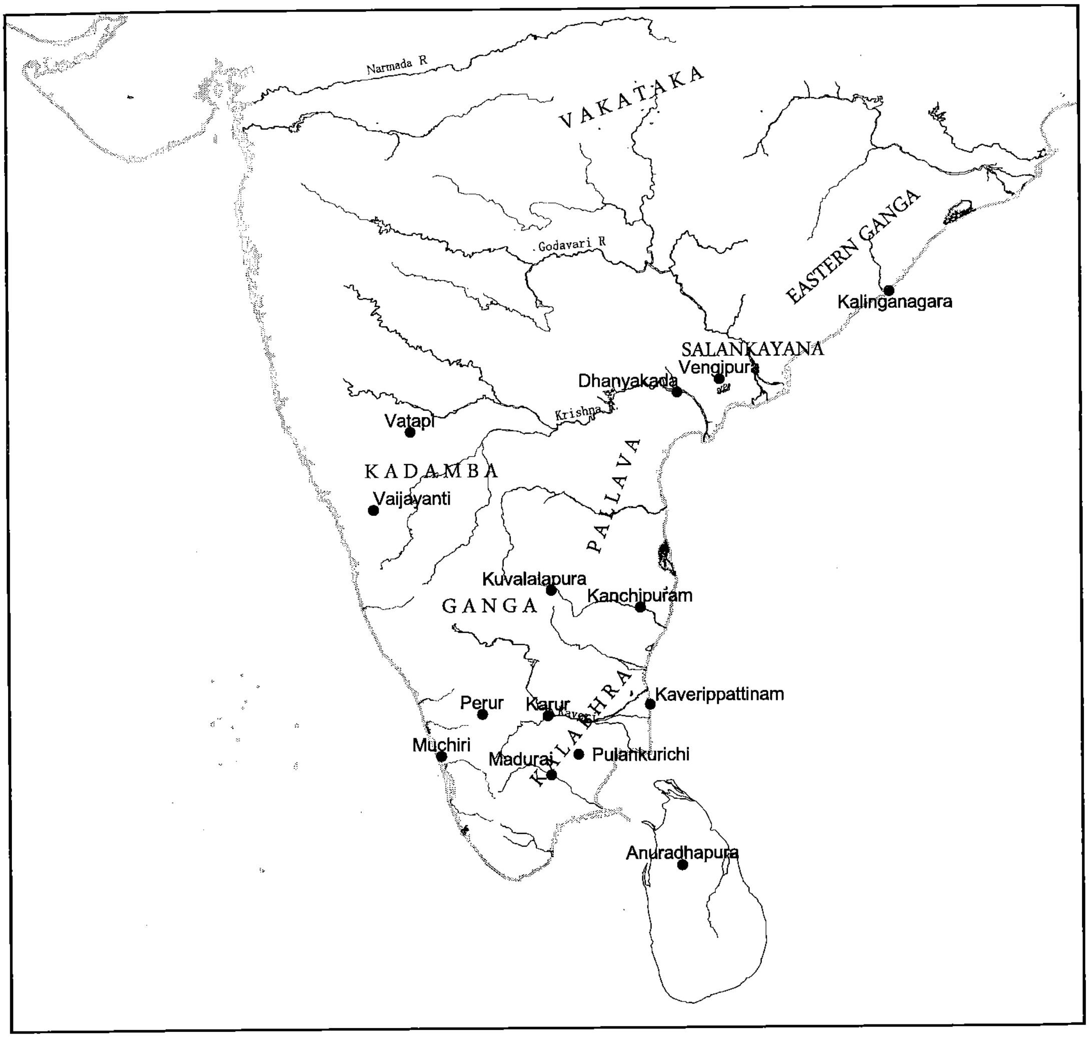
[10] Rajan Gurukkal, who has made a thorough investigation of the problem, while being emphatic that the political structure is not that of a state system, has some misgivings too, as may be guessed from his following statement: '... this [a complex of unevenly evolved chiefdoms] is not the political structure of a state system. It is not the structure of an easily explicable pre-state either. The various levels in the set-up signify different stages of pre-state developments.... At the *vēntar* level authority, some features of the state are found interspersed with predominantly non-state features ...' (Gurukkal 2010: 233–4).

2.4 POST-SATAVAHANA AND POST-SANGAM POLITIES

Y. SUBBARAYALU

The disappearance of the Satavahana 'empire' is said to mark the breaking of the political unity of the Deccan which had lasted for about six centuries from the time of the Nandas. This is a bit of an exaggerated statement. Though a few of the Satavahana kings reigned over a vast area for a couple of decades during the latter half of their rule, it had been mostly a fragmented polity. This is vouched for by the variations in the lineage lists in the different *Purāṇas*, indicating parallel ruling lines in different regions. The existence of several coin series of localities, and references to a number of chiefs generally called *raṭhikas* and *bhōjas* with or without the attribute *mahā* also point to this. Naturally, this medley of ruling houses continued during the post-Satavahana times too (see Map 2.2). A few branches of the Satavahanas in central India (north of the Vidarbha/Berar region) are attested to by their coin finds both from stray hoards and from excavated sites (Mangalam 1999). A few inscriptions in Banavasi (that is Vaijayanti, the future capital of the Kadambas) refer to the Chutu kings, considered to be the Kuntala branch of the Satavahanas. Also, some coins found around Kolhapur in south Maharashtra give the names of some chiefs with the *kura* suffix, who may belong to another branch.

In Aparanta (north Konkan) in the western Deccan, a ruling line called Abhiras appear in the early third century. Earlier, they served the Saka Kshatrapa rulers as generals. Not much


Narmada R
VAKATAKA
Godavari R
EASTERN GANGA
Kalinganagara
SALANKAYANA
Vengipura
Dhanyakada
Krishna R.
Vatapi
KADAMBA
Vaijayanti
PALLAVA
Kuvalalapura
GANGA
Kanchipuram
KALABHRA
Kaveripattinam
Perur
Karur
Muchiri
Madurai
Pulankurichi
Anuradhapura

Map 2.2 South India, 300–550 CE
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

is known about this family except that they used the era starting from 249–50 CE. The Vakatakas were an important ruling family who established their kingdom in the Vidarbha area during the second half of the third century and continued to rule till the end of the sixth century over most of the western and central Deccan. The second king of this line is said to have performed a number of *aśvamēdha*, *vājapēya*, and other Vedic sacrifices. The family had matrimonial relations with the imperial Guptas, the Vishnukundins, and the Kadambas.

In the Orissa region, several small kingdoms came up during the third century and after, following the Chedi kingdom. They are seen in political centres such as Simhapura, Pishtapura, and others and they tried to control the coastal area between the Mahanadi on the north and the Godavari on the south. Many of these kingdoms are also mentioned in the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta (320–80) narrating his meteoric southern expedition down to Kanchipuram in the middle of the fourth century.[11] The Eastern Ganga kingdom appeared in the fifth century with its capital in Kalinga-nagara (modern Mukhalingam) in Ganjam district. These Ganga rulers were known as the lords of Tri-kalinga and were devotees of Gokarnesvara on the hill called Mahendragiri.

In the Godavari–Krishna delta, the Ikshvakus replaced the Satavahanas and Salankayanas. The Ikshvakus, who appeared first at the beginning of the third century, ruled at Vijayapuri in the Nagarjunakonda Valley (see Figure 2.5). They were called the Andhras of Sri Parvata (the Nallamalai Hills). Only four rulers are known from the inscriptions. The founder, Chamtamula, performed the *aśvamēdha* sacrifice and was a devotee of Skanda-Kārttikēya. His successors, however, leaned towards Buddhism and the royal ladies spent lavishly on the erection of Buddhist *viharas* and *stupas*. By about 300 CE, the Pallavas appear to have replaced the Ikshvakus in the south and Salankayanas in the north. About this time, a small ruling family called Anandas (from their *gotra* name) is found in Guntur district centred around the town of Chezerla. The second Ananda king performed the *hiranyagarbha* sacrifice. But the Anandas were also attached to Buddhism.

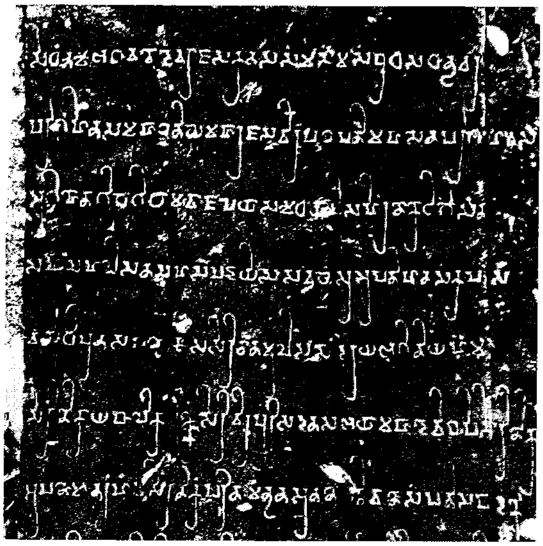


Figure 2.5 Ikshvaku Inscription
Source: Courtesy of the Archaeological Survey of India.

Hastivarman of Vengi (Peddavegi in Krishna district), who was one of the adversaries of Samudra Gupta, was perhaps the third member of the Salankayana family. A few other later members are also known from their copper-plate charters. This family was said to be devoted to Chitrarathasvami, perhaps the sun god. The Vishnukundin family, which had some six generations of rulers (c. 440–600), followed the Salankayana rule in Vengi. The first king is given exaggerated credit for performing eleven *aśvamēdha* and several *agnishṭōma* sacrifices. The Vishnukundin area seems to have included the delta area as well as parts of central Deccan up to Hyderabad. The dynasty disappeared with the rise of the Chalukyas of Badami under Pulakesin II early in the seventh century.

The Pallavas, with their chief city in Kanchipuram in northern Tamil Nadu, seem to have started their early rule in the vicinity of the Krishna in Guntur district as successors to the Ikshvakus. The earliest known inscription of this dynasty, dated during the reign of Simhavarman and written in Prakrit, was found on a pillar at Manchikallu about 20 kilometres east of Nagarjunakonda in Guntur district. Two copper-plate charters written in Prakrit also relate to some grants in the north, one in Andhrapatha and the other in Sātāhani-āhara

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[11] They are Maṇṭarāja of Kaunāla, Svāmidatta of Koṭṭūra, Mahēndragiri of Pishṭapura, Damana of Eraṇḍapalla, Vishṇugōpa of Kāñchi, Nīlarāja of Avamukta, Hastivarman of Vēṅgi, Ugrasēna of Palakka, Kubēra of Dēvarāshṭra, and Dhanañjaya of Kusthalapura (Sircar 1965: 262–8).

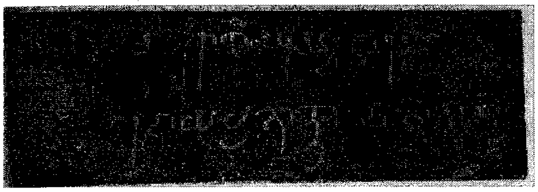

Figure 2.6 Pallava Copper-Plate Inscription
Source: Courtesy of the Archaeological Survey of India.

(Bellary district) (Figure 2.6). An officer in Dhanyakata (near present-day Amaravati) was instructed by prince Sivaskandavarman from Kanchipuram to execute the royal order for the first-mentioned grant. The second grant was made by Sivaskandavarman as king. Vishnugopa (c. 350) of Kanchi, who was one of the southern rulers defeated by Samudra Gupta, may be an immediate successor to Sivaskandavarman. There are twelve copper-plate charters in Sanskrit giving a more or less continuous genealogy of the Pallava kings for about eight or nine generations from c. 350 to c. 550.[12] Most of the charters, both Prakrit and Sanskrit, relate to gifts to Brahmanas and a couple of them are about gifts to temples. All but one of the gift villages mentioned in these charters belong to Karma-rāshṭra, Muṇḍa-rāshṭra, and their surroundings, which are located in southern Andhra Pradesh, that is, Guntur and Nellore districts; the one exceptional case is a village in the northern part of Tamil Nadu. Therefore, there is a suggestion that the capital, Kanchipuram, mentioned in these early charters, could not be the famous Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu and that it was probably a village located close to the Krishna delta. So far, no tangible archaeological evidence has been obtained to prove this suggestion (Mahalingam 1969: 51–2).

By the fifth century, the Pallava rule extended to at least the south of Pennar River, as attested to by the *Lōkavibhāga*.[13] It is also known that during the fifth century the Pallavas had close relations with the Kadambas and the Gangas, as masters and allies. From about 550, we find Pallava inscriptions in the Tamil language too. The earliest known Pallava copper-plate grant in Tamil is the Pallankoyil grant of Simhavarman, father of Simhavishnu and grandfather of Mahendravarman I. The grant was made to a Jaina temple at Tirupparuttikkunru near Kanchipuram by Simhavarman. The prince, Simhavishnu, is said to have conquered the Chola country up to the Kaveri, perhaps from a Kalabhra king if we rely on an eighth-century copper-plate inscription (Mahalingam 1969: 57). Thereafter, the Pallavas became confined to the Tamil country, though they made several expeditions against the Chalukyas of Badami, who established power in the Kannada country. This later development of the Pallava rule from the sixth century will be discussed in section 3.1.

The Kadambas (c. 350–550 CE) were successors to the Chutu family in Banavasi. The Brahmana founder of this dynasty,

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[12] The most reasonable and up-to-date genealogy is that of Mahalingam, 1969. The associated chronology is also mostly reliable as he has taken into account all the links with the Kadamba and the Ganga rulers. In the light of hero-stone inscriptions of the sixth–seventh centuries discovered since the publication of this book, some minor changes may be required in a few dates, for example, the dates of Mahendravarman I and his two predecessors.

[13] The Jaina work, *Lōkavibhāga*, refers to the 22nd regnal year of Simhavarman, obviously a Pallava king, as well as Saka year 380 as the time when it was copied from some early work in a Jaina centre at Pataligrama (same as Tiruppadirippuliyur, part of modern Cuddalore) located on the south bank of the Gadilam, a branch of the Pennar River.

Mayura-sarman (later Mayura-varman), is said, according to a Kadamba charter a few generations later, to have become a Kshatriya giving up his traditional brahmanical pursuits due to a humiliating encounter with a warrior at Kanchipuram where he had gone for Sanskritic studies. Ultimately, taunted by the warlike activities of Mayuravarman in the vicinity of Sri Parvata, it is said that the Pallava king recognized him as a ruler of the territory between the western ocean and the Prehara River (most probably the Tungabhadra). According to later records of the family, Mayuravarman is said to have performed many Vedic sacrifices. The localities of the grants in their inscriptions suggest that the Kadamba territory comprised the modern districts of Uttara Kannada, Belgaum, Shimoga, Hassan, and the adjoining areas (see Figure 2.7).

The Gangas ruled southern Mysore along the upper reaches of the Kaveri from the fourth century and the founder of this dynasty is called Konkanivarman. Though some of their supposedly early copper-plate charters have been rejected as later fabrications, there exist several genuine sets which, when taken with contemporary evidence from the Pallava copper-plate inscriptions, provide a reliable genealogy for the early phase (Ramesh 1984: xix–lxiii). It is believed that Kuvaḷālapura (modern Kolar) was the original centre of their activities and that subsequently Talakkadu, south of Mysore, became their capital. The Ganga rulers were from the beginning ardent supporters of Jainism and some of the kings themselves are supposed to have been scholars. Durvinita (c. 540–600) is given the credit for rendering the famous literary work, *Brihatkatha*, into Sanskrit from the Prakrit original.

Besides the ruling houses already mentioned, there were several others that are obliquely referred to in the available records.

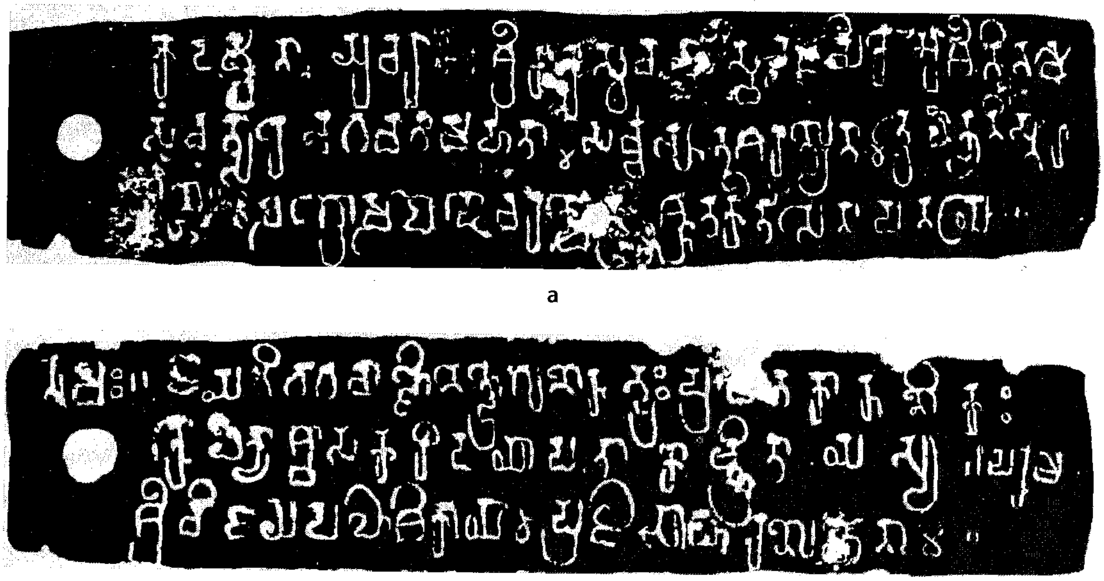

Figure 2.7 Kadamba Copper-Plate Inscriptions
Source: Courtesy of the Archaeological Survey of India.

Some of them become visible in localities other than their places of origin as could be inferred from some early references. Thus the Bāṇas, who are mentioned as the frontier guards of the Pallavas in the Kadamba inscriptions relating to Mayuravarman's rise to power, are to be located near Anantapur in the fourth century. Later, by the seventh–eighth centuries, they are found in southern Andhra and on the borders of adjoining Tamil Nadu. There is more than one Bāṇa lineage or clan. So too we come across more than one Ganga lineage, besides the main one at Talakkad mentioned earlier. In Anantapur and Cuddappah districts, another ruling power, called the Telugu Cholas of Rēnāḍu, is found to rise from the middle of the sixth century even though their inscriptions only go back to the early seventh century. Some of their inscriptions trace their genealogy from Karikāla, the famous Chola ruler of the Kaveri delta. From the names and titles of these rulers, it is believed that they had close relations with the Pallavas from the time of Simhavishnu the Pallava (c. 550).[14]

Generally, it appears from the foregoing information that the Satavahana and post-Satavahana times saw a lot of migration of ruling lineages seeking new pastures. The Kalabhras, who became a force to reckon with in the Kaveri delta and southern parts of Tamil Nadu by about the fourth century, must have been a warlike tribe or clan that migrated from the northern borders of Tamil Nadu. Their rule may be inferred from a group of three inscriptions at Pulangurichi in Sivagangai district datable to about the middle of the fifth century (Subbarayalu 2012: 27–37) (see Figure 2.8). Two kings, obviously father and son, are mentioned in these inscriptions, namely Chēndan and Kūṟṟan, and a military commander called Eṅkumān, son of a *vēḷ* called Marugaṉ. These kings, whose family is not mentioned, are found to have ruled fairly extensively, including the Kongu, the Pandya, and the Chola areas. Though there is no direct reference to the name of the ruling family as Kaḷabhra in these inscriptions, we can say on the basis of circumstantial evidence that these kings belonged to the Kaḷabhra clan. We also have the evidence of a Buddhist scholar, Buddhadatta of the fifth century, who states that he could peacefully pursue his scholarly pursuits while the Kaḷabbha (same as Kaḷabhra) king, Achchuta Vikkanta was ruling over the prosperous Chola country. Buddhadatta must be very close to the time of the Pulangurichi inscriptions. According to these inscriptions, the commander established three temples, two of which are called *devakulam* and the third a *kōṭṭam*. The latter may be a Jaina shrine and the religious affiliations of the other two are not clear.[15] The Kaḷabhra kingdom seems to have lasted until the third quarter of the sixth century when the Pandyas claim to have uprooted their rule and, as noted above, the Pallavas also claim some victory over them about this time.

The historical sketch of the post-Satavahana states in the Deccan and further south during the third to sixth centuries, before the rise of the comparatively bigger Chalukya and Pallava states, is hazy and full of gaps due to the paucity of reliable sources but for some copper-plate inscriptions. In the Tamil country there is a considerable body of literature that followed the Sangam bardic literature. But being mostly concerned with ethical and didactic themes

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[14] The founder, it is believed, was Nandivarman; his son was Simhavishṇu, and grandson, Mahendravarman. *EI*, xxvii, pp. 220–51.

[15] *Dēvakulam* is a neutral term, which may denote any temple, whether orthodox or heterodox.

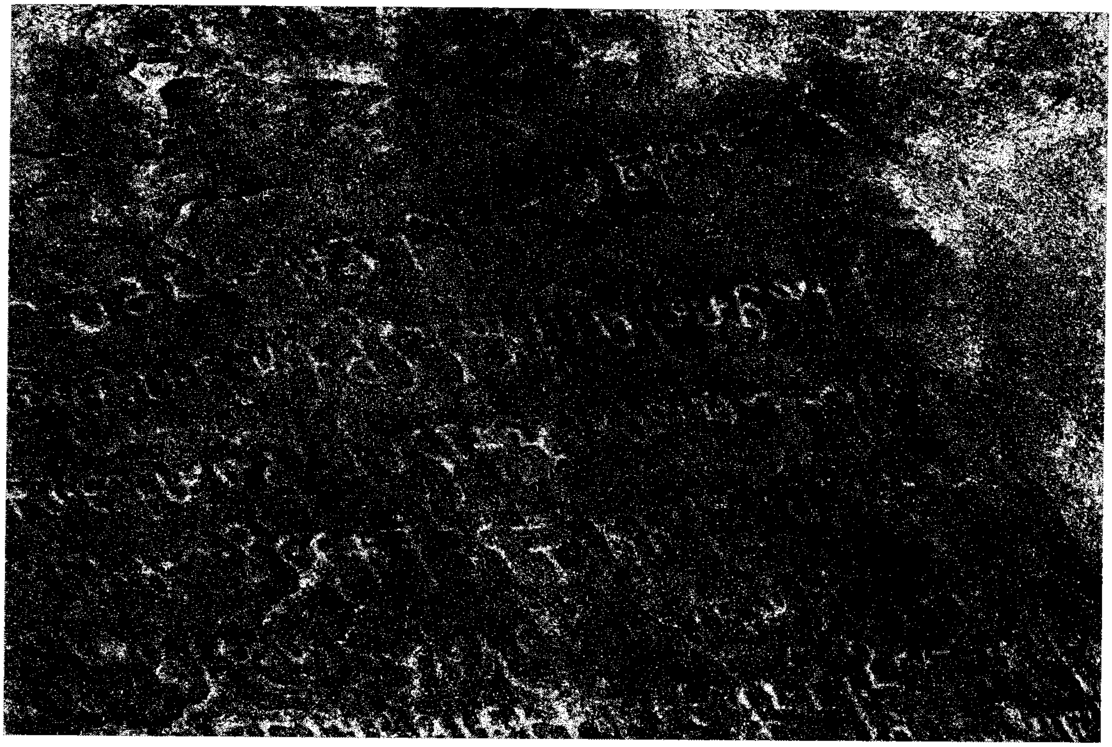

Figure 2.8 Pulangurichi Rock Inscription
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

they do not give any useful historical information. And whatever historical information is found in the *kāvya* works, *Silappatikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai*, is legendary and semi-historical in nature.

As regards the territorial extent of these early states, it is difficult to demarcate the areas clearly. Some kings claim to have fought with and conquered other kings far removed from their own centres. This is, at times, possibly an impression created by the pioneer historians on the basis of poorly understood geographical nomenclature in the early records. Generally, one or two towns figure as important political centres. Interestingly, some hills are found associated with several ruling houses and some sort of administrative divisions are noticed everywhere. The earlier *āhāra* appears to have been replaced by *vishaya* in general and *rāshṭra* in a few cases. The place of *vishaya* vis-à-vis the indigenous *nāḍu* is not clear due to the rare appearance of the latter term in the inscriptions available until the sixth century.

Another striking feature of the records is the matrimonial alliances between distant ruling houses. How far they reflect the real situation is not ascertainable from the meagre evidence. However, one thing that may be stressed is that the rise of a ruling elite in different localities, separate and distancing themselves from the general mass, was a general social phenomenon of these centuries. This is quite clear from the marriage relations among and between persons wielding so-called official designations like *bhōja*, *raṭhika*, *talavara*, *raja*, and so on, on the one hand, and the rulers, on the other.

The copper-plate charters issued by one or the other ruler are mostly concerned with recording grants of land to Brahmanas or sometimes to temples, These are found in the Prakrit language until the early fourth century CE and thereafter in Sanskrit. Very few inscriptions are available in non-Prakrit/Sanskrit languages. Local language inscriptions start appearing from the fifth century CE, initially in Tamil and a little later in Kannada and Telugu. As in most of the Sanskrit charters the language is stereotyped and eulogistic in nature, the reality of the situation, political or social, is not easy to understand. There is a general tendency to emphasize the Puranic and Sastraic association of the rulers, the performance of Vedic sacrifices, the rulers' devotion to Puranic and Vedic deities—several of which were actually local deities metamorphosed into Puranic deities, and the rendering of local names, personal as well as geographical, in Sanskritized garb. At least a member of each of the ruling houses is found to have performed or claimed to have performed Vedic rituals and sacrifices, such as the *aśvamēdha*, *agnishṭōma*, *vājapēya*, *rājasūya*, and *hiraṇyagarbha*. There is also a tendency to ascribe a *gotra* name to most of these new ruling families. Though in a few cases, as in the Kadamba family, the founder of the respective family could have been himself a Brahmana, in most other cases it is possibly only an ascribed status. It may also be observed that in the post-Satavahana period the new kings generally take coronation names with the suffix-component *varman*. A peculiar feature among some rulers of the Deccan is the continuation of the so-called matronymics found earlier in some Satavahana names. Names such as Gotami-puta, Vasishti-puta, and so on, are explained as formed on the basis of the mother's *gotra* name. But there is no convincing explanation as yet for this feature.[16]

Finally, a socio-religious feature that has been overlooked or simply ignored is the camouflaging of reality in the Sanskrit charters. While they seemingly emphasize the patronage given to Brahmanas and Vedic culture by the rulers, they ignore the real religious leanings of the particular rulers. For instance, the Gangas were all along ardent followers of Jainism. Simhavishnu, the father of Mahendravarman, made a sumptuous grant to the Jain temple near Kanchipuram and Mahendravarman himself was a Jain until he was persuaded to convert to Saivism, if we are to believe the Saivite *bhakti* tradition. In the Pandya country, until around 700 CE the kings were Jains. From these pieces of evidence we may infer that Jainism had a strong influence on most of the ruling houses of the post-Satavahana centuries until the rise of the *bhakti* movement in the seventh century and later. The Jain literary and ethical works both in Tamil and Kannada emphasized the absolute moral qualities of the rulers rather than their ritual status. For instance, the Tamil work, *Tirukkural* of circa fifth century (see section 2.2) takes the personal moral qualities of the king as the quintessential element of kingship. This Jain conception of kingship, as Burton Stein (Stein 1984: 11–16) succinctly put it, differed from the morally neutral conception of the valorous king in early Tamil poetry, on the one hand, and the contingently moral king of the sacrificial, Brahmanical *śāstras* and *kāvyas*, on the other.

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[16] The Ikshvakus, immediate successors of the Satavahanas, and some of their subordinate chiefs bear matronymics. The practice is not found thereafter. For a detailed discussion of this issue, see Gopalachari (1976: 49–53).

2.5 RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS IN EARLY SOUTH INDIA

Y. SUBBARAYALU

2.5.1 Religion as Known from Archaeological Monuments

The early historic period, starting from about the third century BCE, witnessed the spread of the north Indian religions in the Deccan and further south; first the two heterodox ones, Buddhism and Jainism, and then the brahmanical religion based on Vedic rituals and beliefs. Archaeological and epigraphical data is a major source of our information for this study. The inscriptions of Asoka (c. 268–232 BCE) in several sites in northern Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh attest to the fact that a major part of south India came under the political influence of the north during the time of the Mauryas, particularly during the reign of Asoka. And the spread of Buddhism in these parts may also be attributed to the proselytizing zeal of the emperor. However, it is only at Amaravati/Dhanyakaḍa that a fragmentary Asokan pillar edict was found in association with a contemporary Buddhist stupa site. At Sannati in Gulbarga district of Karnataka, the Asokan edicts are found to precede the nearby Buddhist site of Kanaganahalli by more than a century. And in all other remaining sites (about ten) of Asokan inscriptions, no clear evidence for Buddhist association has so far been found. In any case, these sites would have attracted Buddhist pilgrims one way or another. During the later part of the second century BCE and after, quite a number of Buddhist sites started to appear in the coastal parts of both western and eastern Deccan as well as in some interior places (Prasad 2004).

In the western Deccan, there are several hundred rock-cut structures scooped out of the low-lying trap rocks, the earliest of which may go back to early second century BCE but a bulk of them is said to belong to the first century CE and later. Many of them are dedicated to the Buddhist *sangha*. These rock-cut structures are of two kinds. One, *chaitya-griha* or *chaitya* shrines, which were rectangular in plan with an apsidal back and barrel-vault roof having two rows of pillars separating the nave and aisle; these *chaitya* shrines have a miniature stupa at the back as the object of worship. Two, the *vihāra* or monastery with wings of rooms cut sideways, which were places of residence for the monks and nuns. These stone structures were imitations of wooden prototypes. In the eastern Deccan, that is, coastal Andhra Pradesh, rock-cut structures are found only in a few places, such as Guntupalle and Vijayawada. Most of the east coast sites are structural ones made of brick and in some cases stone rubble. So far, more than a hundred sites with Buddhist remains have been discovered and some of them have even been excavated. A few sites like Nagarjunakonda have been extensively subjected to archaeological investigation yielding a wealth of cultural information (Subrahmanyam et al. 1975) (see Figures 2.9 and 2.10). A concentration of these sites is found in the Krishna–Godavari delta. Guntupalle in West Godavari district, and Amaravati and Bhattiprolu in Guntur district, are a few of the well-known sites. The evidence at Bhattiprolu seems to indicate that local chiefs (*rājas*) along with merchant elites (*gōshṭi*, *nigama*) were the patrons of the above Buddhist complexes that came up from the second century BCE onwards. All the above sites have different combinations of *stūpa* (or *chaitya*), *vihāra* (monastery) and *chaitya-griha* components. In some places, only a free-standing stupa is found. The stupas are hemispherical in form; the bigger

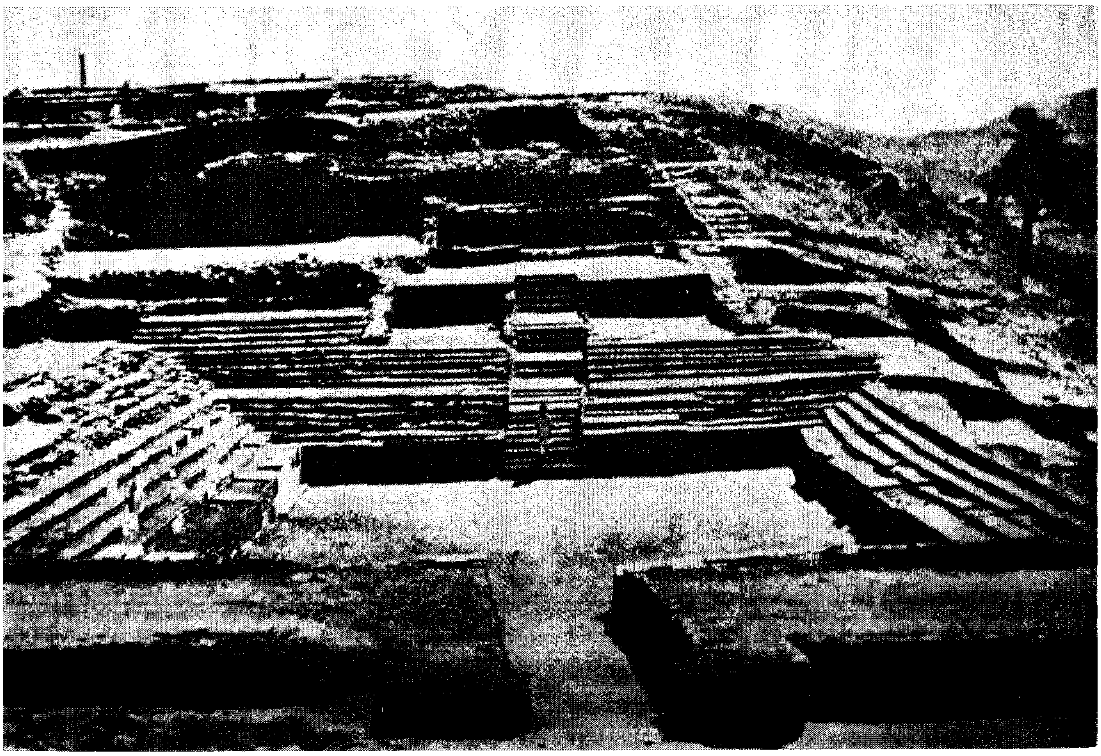

Figure 2.9 Amphitheatre at Nagarjunakonda
Source: Courtesy of the Archaeological Survey of India.

ones are found with cardinal projections, and surrounded with a railing and arched gateways. Earlier stupas do not have the image of the Buddha and his presence is depicted in a symbolic (or theriomorphic) form only. Gradually, the anthropomorphic form of the Buddha is included as part of the stupa sculpture depicting scenes from the *jātaka* stories. The size of the monastery (*vihāra*) varied according to the number of cells or rooms it contained. Some were big with more than twenty cells. The development of different Buddhist architectural complexes is said to be due to the growth of sectarian differences right from the time of the Buddha's death (Sarkar 1966). The cleavage into two big sects in the beginning (Theravadin and Mahasanghikas) gradually gave rise to several sub-sects and became clearly evident from the first century BCE onwards.[17] There were monks and nuns from different regions, far and near—Sri Lanka, Gandhara, China, Tosali, Yavana, Vanga, Vanavasi, Damila, and so on. It has to be noted that royal ladies and other elite sections of society patronized most of these Buddhist institutions at Nagarjunakonda.

In Karnataka, except the Sannati/Kanaganahalli complex, there are only a few other Buddhist sites though there is a concentration of Asokan inscriptions in northern Karnataka

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[17] The Ikshvaku inscriptions of the third century CE at Nagarjunakonda refer to four major sects representing both the Hinayana and Mahayana traditions and about thirty Buddhist establishments.

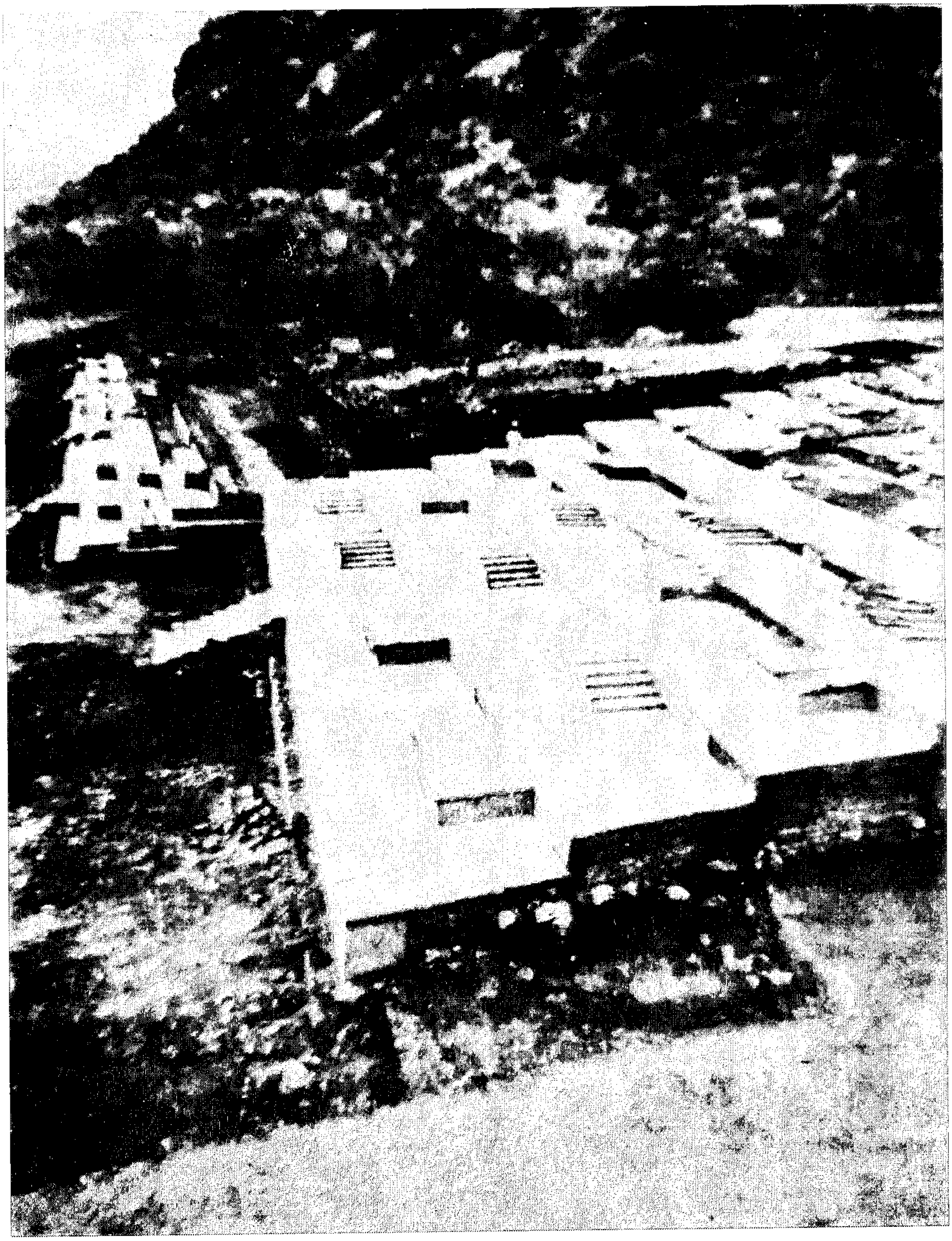

Figure 2.10 River Ghat at Nagarjunakonda
Source: Courtesy of the Archaeological Survey of India.

as noted earlier. In Tamil Nadu, it was only at Kaverippattinam that a Buddhist complex datable to about fourth century CE was discovered in the course of an excavation (Rajan 1994: 26–41). Buddhism became very popular in the Kaveri delta about this time and there developed lively exchanges between the Buddhists of this area and those of Sri Lanka, as may be inferred from the Pāli works written by Buddhadatta (c. fifth century) who resided in a local *vihāra*.[18] According to Hiuen Tsang, Asoka built several stupas at Kanchipuram but so far no clear archaeological evidence has been obtained to support this statement.

Archaeologically, the Jain presence is not as conspicuous as that of the Buddhists in the Deccan, though according to tradition Jain migration started as early as the time of the Maurya king Chandragupta, who is said to have renounced his throne and followed the Jain saint Bhadrabahu to the south and spent several years at Sravana Belgola in Karnataka before his ritual suicide.However, neither Sravana Belgola nor any other place in Karnataka has any evidence before the sixth century CE of the Jain presence there.[19] On the Andhra coast, a few sites are considered to be associated with Jains; particularly the excavations at Vaddamanu in Guntur district are said to have yielded a few inscribed names on pottery suggesting Jain association, and the local stupa itself is considered to be of the Jain faith (Sastry et al. 1992). But the evidence here is a bit ambivalent and most other sites in the locality have yielded only Buddhist evidence. In Orissa, abutting the Andhra coast on the northeast, there is clear evidence of Jain presence in the time of Kharavela and even earlier. Kharavela (c. 50 CE) dedicated cave shelters to the Jain monks and, according to his Hathigumpha inscription (*EI*, xx, pp. 71ff; Sircar 1965: 213–21), is said to have retrieved a Jain image that had been taken away by a Nanda king. The place called Konakondla in Anantapur district has a strong tradition along with later inscriptions to associate it with the great Jain teacher Kundakundāchārya who is believed to have lived circa the first century CE (Rao 1973: 152–4).

Further south in Tamil Nadu, there is unmistakable evidence of Jain presence from about the middle of the third century BCE, which is corroborated by the Tamil Brahmi inscriptions in natural rock-shelters concentrated near Madurai and other places. The Jain monks seem to have accompanied the merchants from the north whose presence is verified archaeologically in Tamil Nadu, as indicated in section 1.4. The term *amaṇa*, which occurs in the inscriptions, leads one to believe that the rock-shelters might have been used not only by Jain and Buddhist monks, but the Ājivikas as well. The term *amaṇa*, being a Tamil variant of *śramaṇa/samaṇa*, may denote all the heterodox groups; but available evidence affirms that only Jains were meant in these contexts, as there is no reference at all to the Buddhist *sangha* in the inscriptions.[20]

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[18] Buddhadatta, who is famous for his Pali works and commentaries like *Vinayavinichchhaya* and *Abhidhammavatara*, is said to have lived in the Chola country in a monastery donated by a Venhudasa in a village called Bhutamangala on the banks of the Kaveri when Achutavikkanta of the Kalabbhakula was ruling the area. He also describes Kaverippattinam in glowing terms (Sastri 1955: 101–2).

[19] The earliest reference to the Bhadrabahu–Chandragupta episode is found in two inscriptions of the sixth–seventh centuries found at Sravana Belgola. *Epigraphia Carnatica* (n.s.), vol. 2 (1973), pp. lxxiv–lxxvi.

[20] This may be understood with reference to contemporary Sri Lanka where, in identical contexts, the *sangha* is conspicuously found. Moreover, these shelters in Tamil Nadu were continuously occupied by the Jains until the tenth century or so.

The spread of Vedic or brahmanic cults and beliefs in south India is generally believed to have preceded Buddhism and Jainism. This belief is based on the *Itihāsa-purāṇa* tradition relating to Agastya. As noted elsewhere (section 1.3) there is no reliable historical evidence to corroborate this tradition. If we go by inscriptional evidence, the southern movement of the Brahmanical religion could not be earlier than the first century BCE. It is only in the late first century BCE that a Satavahana king, Satakarni (early first century CE) boasts of performing Vedic sacrifices, including the *aśvamēdha*. A little earlier, Kharavela also takes pride in performing those sacrifices. These two rulers were otherwise staunch patrons of Buddhism and Jainism respectively. Archaeological evidence for the building of temples dedicated to puranic-agamic deities is found at the earliest only in the third century CE at Nagarjunakonda. These temples consisted of a single (sometimes double) oblong, apsidal or square shrine with a front-pillared portico. There is a solitary Vaishnava temple whose deity is called Ashṭabhujasvāmi. Other temples were either Saivite or those dedicated to Skanda-Kārttikēya. Apparently, Skanda-Kārttikēya (otherwise called Mahāsēna) was a popular deity of the times throughout the Deccan; Chamtamula, the first Ikshvaku king, was a devotee of Mahāsēna. Later, the Kadambas and the Chalukyas of Badami were also ardent devotees of this deity.

An interesting cultural feature found in Nagarjunakonda is the raising of memorial pillars called *chhāya-stambhas* in memory of the dead. Nearly 22 such pillars were found there. They were not confined to any particular section of contemporary society as they commemorated the death of kings, nobles, artisans, religious persons, and military leaders (Sarkar et al. 1980). These memorial stones may be compared to those referred to in early Tamil literature that were erected in memory of dead heroes. Both may have derived from the megalithic burial practices of the preceding Iron Age. Another popular primitive cult was centred around the worship of a mother goddess. The proto-form of this goddess is depicted in Nagarjunakonda by a pot with flowers.[21]

2.5.2 Religion in Early Tamil Country as Known from Literature

In the field of religion, as gleaned from early Tamil literature, there are features that may be recognized clearly as those coming from the north as well as those that are indigenous. Some scholars have taken the extreme position that it is difficult to differentiate the features as, according to them, they had blended completely and that it is the northern elements that had become the dominant, 'civilizing' influence. That this is a biased view was noted above (see section 2.2). One reason for the seemingly conspicuous presence of northern features in the Tamil society of the day is the considerable number of Brahmanas among the poets of the Sangam literature, about 10 per cent of the total, as indicated by the *gotra* names. Some of these poets were also good Sanskrit scholars, quite familiar with the Vedic, Sastraic, and Puranic lore. Naturally, they freely used north Indian concepts and mythology in their compositions. At the same time, they were quite at home in Tamil literary conventions too, imitating and imbibing the style of the local bardic tradition. These Brahmana poets were highly respected, particularly by the rulers of the day, for their scholarship and for their impeccable manners;

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[21] The *Lajjagauri* form of the mother goddess with a human body and head and other features of a lioness seems to be a subsequent development.

they pleased the rulers with their panegyric poems, enjoyed their company and hospitality and at the same time they took liberty to advise the kings informally if and when occasion demanded it.

Some of the panegyric poems on the kings called *vēntar*s contain most of the northern ideas and mythological elements, while in other general contexts they are very rare. Also, in certain poems, which are usually assigned to the last stage of the Sangam anthologies, as in the *Paripāḍal* and the *Tirumurugāṟṟuppaḍai*, these elements show some increase when compared to the earlier poems. The northern elements comprise mythological conceptions of Vedic and Puranic deities, Vedic rituals and sacrifices, and related ideas and concepts. With a few rare exceptions, the northern gods were usually mentioned by their attributes in Tamil, like the 'three-eyed god' to denote Siva, and not by their original Sanskrit names. Some northern deities are more conspicuous than others. Siva, with his various iconographical attributes, is a familiar deity. The next prominent divine being is Krishna, under his Tamil name *mayon* ('the black one'), accompanied always by his brother the 'white' Balarama. The goddess Lakshmi, known as 'Tiru' or 'Tirumakaḷ', is quite familiar and venerated as a deity conferring good fortune. Indra and Brahma are rarely mentioned. Parasurama 'who annihilated the race of warriors' is said to have performed Vedic sacrifices at Chellur (Taliparamba in north Kerala). Arundhati, considered a symbol of chastity, is invoked when praising faithful wives. The god of death, known as *Kūṟṟuvan*, may be equated with Yama but his weapon is always the axe, not the noose of the northern tradition. It was believed that heroes who died fighting and people of meritorious deeds went to heaven, 'the world of gods' (*vānōrulakam*). On the other hand, hell, named by the Sanskrit term *niraiya*, was a dreaded place, and the destination for the wicked. The ideas of *karma* and reincarnation were also known.

The epics, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, were familiar to some extent. A few kings took pride in associating their ancestors with some of the epic heroes and events. So too some kings were praised for their performance of Vedic sacrifices like the *rājasūya*. The *yūpa* pillars associated with these sacrifices are mentioned in several places. The Chera kings are said to have helped indigent brahmanas with material assistance for performing their own sacrifices. Some poets have also written admiringly of the regular performance of fire rituals by brahmanas in their homes.

While the brahmanical elements from the north are clearly visible in literature, the influence of the heretical religions, Jainism and Buddhism, is not so obvious. This led to the belief that the latter two religions reached the Tamil country later than the brahmanical religion. Actually, as noted above, both in the Deccan and further south there is clear archaeological evidence to assert just the opposite. In any case, a few poets appear to be familiar with some myths found in the Buddhist *jātaka* stories. The *paḷḷi*, which were places where Jain and Buddhist monks and their disciples (*sāvakar*) lived and prayed, existed in certain suburbs of big towns like Madurai and Kaverippattinam. There is a reference to merchants in the big port town of Kaveripattinam practising vegetarianism and eschewing animal slaughter (*Pattinappalai*, lines 194–214); certainly those merchants must have come under the influence of Jainism. There is also the case of the Chola king, Kopperunjolan, who, due to some deep anguish at the rebellious behaviour of his own son, committed suicide by fasting along with a few close friends. This ritual suicide, called *vaḍakkiruttal* (literally 'to sit facing the north'), is referred to in several *Purananuru* poems (Hart 1999: 88–91). Such suicide episodes may have been influenced by the Jain practice of *sallēkhana* death. Also, several poems in the *Puṟanāṉūṟu* that dwell upon the ephemeral nature of life may be attributed to the influence of Buddhism and Jainism (Hart 1999: 69). One reason for the scarce presence of the heretical religions in Sangam works may be due to the highly ethical orientation of those religions, which was an inhibiting factor in singing of the warlike qualities of the elite sections. Bardic literature given to praising warriors and their incessant warfare could not have been attractive to the literate Jains and Buddhists, whereas the Brahmana literates did not seem to have any inhibitions in taking up that genre of poetry. On the other hand, it is the Jains who contributed the most to the ethical genre of Tamil poetry that became the norm in the post-Sangam days (see section 2.2).

The northern religious elements noticed so far, either orthodox or heterodox, cannot be said to have taken deep roots in Tamil society, as it is quite obvious from the early literature that animism was the dominant religious trend at that time. It was popularly believed that several things in nature, like rocks, water bodies, groves, trees, doors of houses, war drums, weapons, and so on, had sacred power. Beautiful post-adolescent girls were also believed to have this sacred power that was denoted by the term *aṇangu*, besides terms like *kaḍavuḷ*, *iṟai*, and *chūr*. The gods of the ancient Tamils were, therefore, not transcendent beings, but rather immanent powers present in objects encountered everyday and involved in every aspect of ordinary life. They were generally fearsome beings and potentially dangerous unless pacified by sacrifices and rituals; their worship included offerings of flowers, rice, and toddy, and also the blood of lambs and cocks.

The worship of Murugu (or Murugan) and Koṟṟavai, the two indigenous deities, was quite popular. Though both these deities are identified with two northern deities, Skanda-Karttikeya and Durga respectively, their primitive features can be recognized to a great extent. Murugan, also called Chevvēḷ and Neḍuvēḷ, was a hill god; according to poetic conventions, he was considered the presiding deity of the *kuṟiñji* or hilly region and was worshipped through ecstatic and frenzied dances, mediated through his shaman-priest, *vēlan*. Koṟṟavai was the goddess of the forests and was also the goddess of war and victory (Mahalakshmi 2011). Belief in demons and ghosts who haunted places of death,

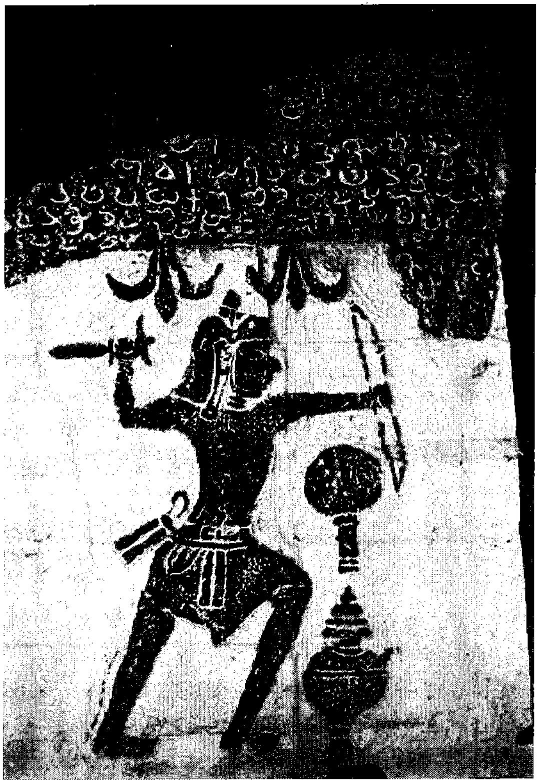

Figure 2.11 Hero-Stone Vatteluttu Inscription

Source: Institut Français de Pondichéry.

particularly the battlefield, and feasting on corpses was prevalent. A victorious king used to celebrate his triumph by performing what is called the war sacrifice (*maṟakkaḷa-vēlvi*) by making a hearth of the slain heads of the enemies and cooking the flesh of the dead with blood under the vigilant supervision of a barren priestess (or queen). Interestingly, this war sacrifice is celebrated in the very same poem that also praises highly the king's accomplishment of the ancient Vedic sacrifice with the help of Brahmanas well-versed in the four Vedas (Hart 1999: 32–3; Kailasapathy 1968: 241–2). This may imply that the penetration of the northern, brahmanical culture was still superficial.

The veneration and worship of dead heroes who died fighting the enemy in cattle raids is another familiar local cult. Memorial stones (called *naḍukal*, or simply *kal*) with the image of the hero engraved on them and with some inscription praising the feat were put up by his kith and kin. This hero cult may be seen as an extension of the megalithic burial practice and it continued until about the tenth century or so in certain semi-dry areas that had a predominantly pastoral economy (see Figure 2.11).[22] In this connection, the worship of a pillar called *kandu* erected in the village common (*podiyil* or *maṉṟam*) may be recalled here (Srinivasan 1960: 7–8). Perhaps these pillars also represented ancient hero-stones that may ultimately be traced to the menhirs of the Megalithic culture.

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[22] Recently, four primitive hero-stones datable to circa second/first centuries BCE were discovered in the upper Vaigai Valley (Rajan and Yatheeskumar 2007). This is a significant discovery as it corroborates for the first time the historicity of the hero-stone tradition as described in the Sangam Tamil literature and indirectly supports the earliest limit of some of the Sangam poems to early first century BCE.

2.6 ROMAN TRADE AND CONTACTS WITH SOUTHEAST ASIA

NOBORU KARASHIMA

2.6.1 Roman Trade

Brisk trade was witnessed during the Sangam period between the Roman Empire in the Mediterranean and peninsular India through the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea. There are three kinds of evidence that attest to this. First, Greek and Roman literature, including the writings of geographers who lived during the first century BCE to the second century CE, such as Plinius (Pliny), Ptolemaios (Ptolemy), and Strabon (Strabo), and an anonymous guide book, *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (hereafter *Periplus*), for merchants who wanted to trade with the people in the Indian Ocean; second, Sangam poems that refer to Roman ships and Roman people they called Yavanas;[23] third, archaeological evidence obtained from excavations of ancient port towns on both the Malabar and Coromandel coasts, including findings such as Roman coins, glass, and metal objects brought from the West.

For example, in his *Geographia*, Ptolemaios mentions Indian ports such as Barygaza, Muziris, and Poduke ((Map 2.3), and these are also described in the *Periplus* written in the first century CE. Barygaza (Barkachcha/

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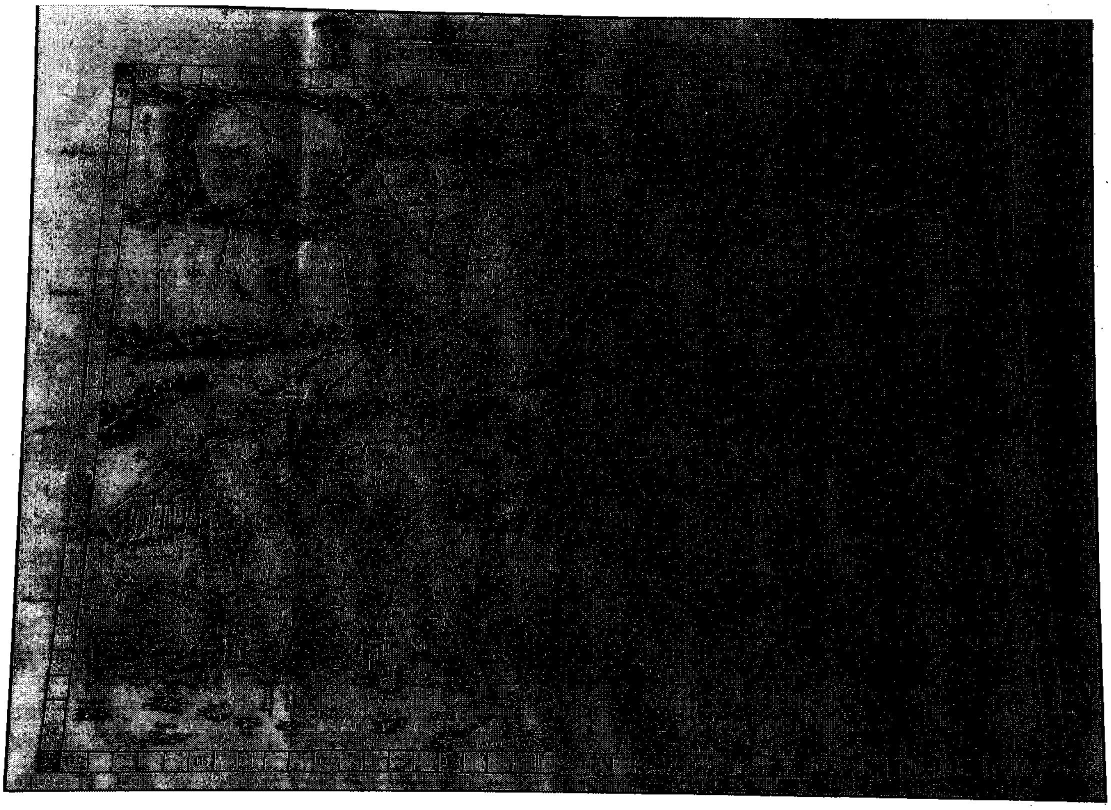
[23] The word 'Yavana' comes from the Greek word 'Ionia', but in India both the Greek and Roman people were simply called Yavanas without any distinction.



Map 2.3 Map of India in *Geographia* by Ptolemaios, published in 1511 in Venice
Source: Courtesy of Toshiaki Ohji, who owns the map.

Broach) was a famous port facing the Gulf of Cambay and Poduke has been identified with Puducherry (Pondicherry) on the Coromandel Coast. Though Muziris must have been Muchiri, a famous port town sung about in the Sangam poetry, for a long time, it had not been associated satisfactorily with any modern town. Quite recently, however, it has been identified with some certainty as Pattanam, a small village south of Kodungalur in Kerala (Figures 2.12 and 2.13). Some brick structures were excavated at the site (Cherian et al. 2012). Commercial activities conducted in Muziris and other ports are described in the *Periplus* as follows:

> Ships in these ports of trade carry full loads because of the volume and quantity of pepper and malabathron. They offer a market for: mainly a great amount of money; peridot (?); ... multicolored textiles; sulphide of antimony; coral; raw glass; copper; tin; lead; wine.... They also export: good supplies of fine-quality pearls; ivory; Chinese (silk) cloth; Gangetic nard; malabathron, brought here from the interior; all kinds of transparent gems; diamonds; sapphires; tortoise shell.... For those sailing here from Egypt, the right time to set out is around the month of July.... (*Periplus*, lvi [Casson 1989: 85])

It is clear enough from these descriptions that there was considerable trade between the Roman Empire and south India in the first few centuries of the first millennium. This is further corroborated by Sangam poetry. According to a poem in the *Aganāṉūṟu* (149, ll. 9–12), 'the

Figure 2.12 Periyar River
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

beautifully built ships of the Yavanas came, agitating the white foams of the Periyaru (river), with gold and returned with pepper, and Muchiri resounded with the noise'. In the *Tabula Peutingeriana*,[24] Muziris is depicted with the building of a temple to Augustus. The recently discovered Vienna Museum Papyrus (palaeographically second century CE) has revealed new information regarding the trade carried on between Muziris and Alexandria. It records the import of Gangetic nard, ivory, an bales of cloth from Muziris by an Alexandria merchant using a loan drawn up in Muzir (Sidebotham 1991: 30).

Another poem from the *Puṟanāṉūṟu* (56, 18–20) recounts 'the cool, sweet-smelling wi brought by the Yavanas, in beautiful ships a drunk daily from gold cups held by dams who wore bright bracelets'. The *Silappadikār* talks about Kovalan who entered the city g of Madurai guarded by the ranks of the be Yavana swordsmen (*Silappadikāram*, xiv), a another poem describes the Yavana soldiers

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[24] The *Tabula Peutingeriana* (Peutinger table, Peutinger map) is a guide map showing the road network in the Roman Empire, including parts of Asia (Persia, India). The map is named after Konrad Peutinger, German humanist and antiquarian of the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries.

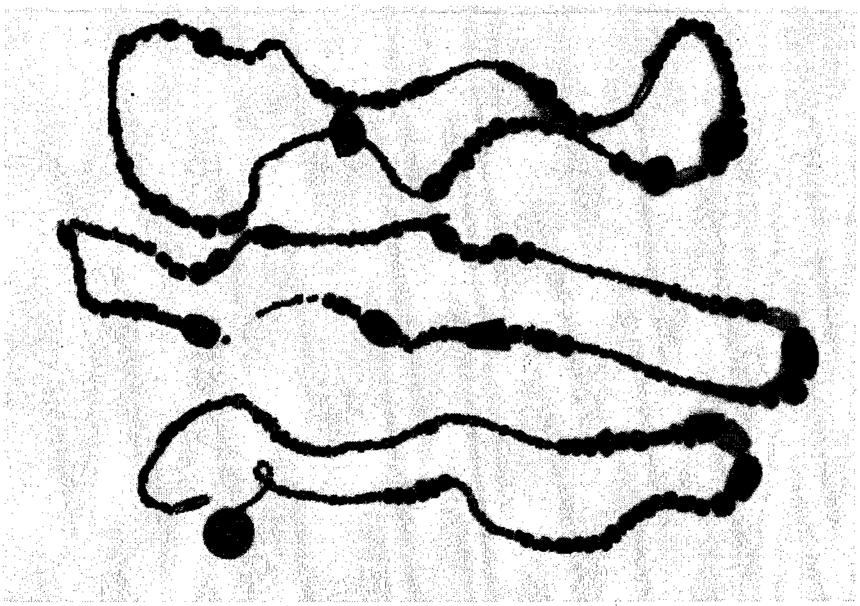

Figure 2.13 Beads Found in Pattanam
Source: Courtesy of Takako Karashima.

'The valiant-eyed Yavanas whose bodies were strong and looked terrifying and who wore besides a coat a long piece of cloth hanging low and with many folds.' (*Mullaippāṭṭu*, ll, 59–61). The Sangam kings liked to employ them as palace guards.

From the accounts in the *Periplus* and a Sangam poem relating to Muchiri, it appears that the most important item imported from Roman Empire was the gold coin (*aureus*) and the most important item exported was pepper. The Roman Empire saw its gold draining away, and the Roman statesman Plinius (Pliny the Younger) lamented in his letter that the Roman people wanted to pay money for a commodity such as this—neither sweet nor tasty. A large number of Roman gold coins and medallions have been discovered in south India, but they seem to have been hoarded as treasure without being used as currency. Pepper produced on the slopes of the Western Ghats in Kerala was in great demand in China too and continued to be the most important commodity exported from the ports of Malabar in the East–West maritime trade.

The most important excavation done so far in relation to Roman trade was the one in Arikamedu, a few kilometres south of Puducherry, in 1945 by Mortimer Wheeler revealing an ancient brick structure and findings such as amphorae, glass and metal objects (materials as well as artifacts), and sherds of imported pottery (Arretine ware) and locally made black ware with rouletted design (Wheeler et al. 1946). Later excavations conducted by Vimala Begley in 1989–92 produced some more material finds (Begley 1996/2005). Brick structures include tanks, walls, and store or workshop rooms (Figure 2.14). Beads were discovered aplenty, and the tanks are believed to have been used for dyeing, which indicates that Arikamedu was an industrial centre manufacturing textiles, beads, etc., getting some of its materials and ideas from

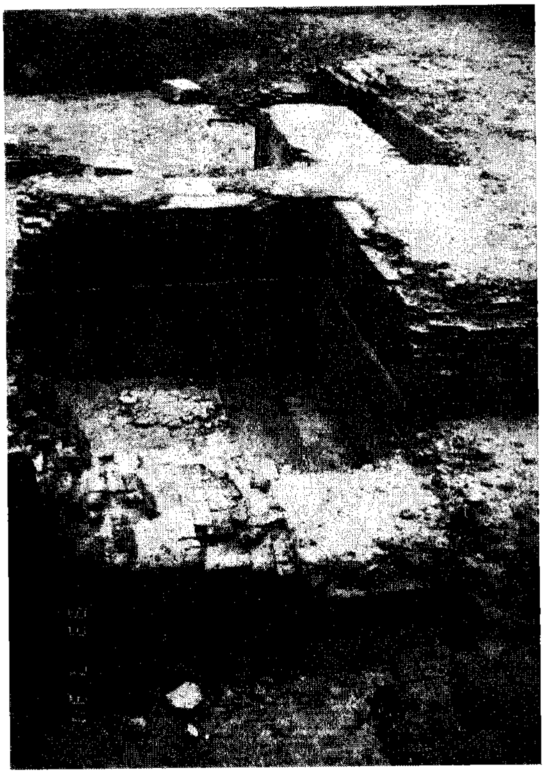

Figure 2.14 Excavation at Arikamedu by Vimala Begley
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

the western world. Anyway, from the imported objects and the name Pudu-cherry (cheri),[25] we are able to identify this place with the ancient port described as Poduke by Roman writers.

Kaveripattinam, known as Pūmpugār, at the estuary of the Kaveri River, has been identified with Khaberis of Ptolemaios and Kamara of *Periplus*, though now it is a small village. In this village, a brick structure was also excavated, and it is believed to have been a wharf to which ships were moored (Figure 2.15). The other places on the Coromandel Coast that reveal through excavation their connection with Roman trade include Vasavasamudram at the mouth of the Palar River, Karaikkadu near Cuddalore, and Alagankulam at the mouth of the Vaigai. From all these places, fragments of Roman amphorae, rouletted ware, glass or semi-precious beads, similar to those obtained in Arikamedu, have been discovered (Raman 1991).

It is a bit strange, however, that rouletted ware was found mostly on the Coromandel Coast and further up north on the east coast up to Tamluk, and along the Godavari and Krishna Rivers, and scarcely on the Malabar Coast.[26] On the coast facing the Arabian Sea, in contrast, another type of indigenous pottery belonging to the same period, called Red Polished Ware, has been discovered, though its concentration is seen in the Kathiawar peninsula. Considering the distribution patterns and also the date of the pottery, which goes back to the second or first century BCE, Vimala Begley suggests the existence of a local commercial network before the start of the Roman trade, around the beginning of the Common Era, showing the development of certain industries in south India in the last few centuries of the first millennium BCE, though technological ideas, for example rouletting, may have come from the Hellenistic world (Begley and De Puma 1991: Introduction).

It is generally believed on the basis of a passage in the *Periplus* that a helmsman called Hippalos (or Hippalus) discovered the monsoon winds, which facilitated direct navigation from Arabia to south India, and that accordingly the monsoon winds came to be known as the 'winds of Hippalos'. Recent studies, however, consider this interpretation as incorrect, as the monsoon winds were already familiar from the

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[25] Since the Greek alphabet lacks the palatal letter *ch*, it is substituted by the guttural letter *k*.

[26] It is reported that excavation of Pattanam yielded some sherds of the rouletted ware (Shajan et al. 2008; Cherian et al. 2012).

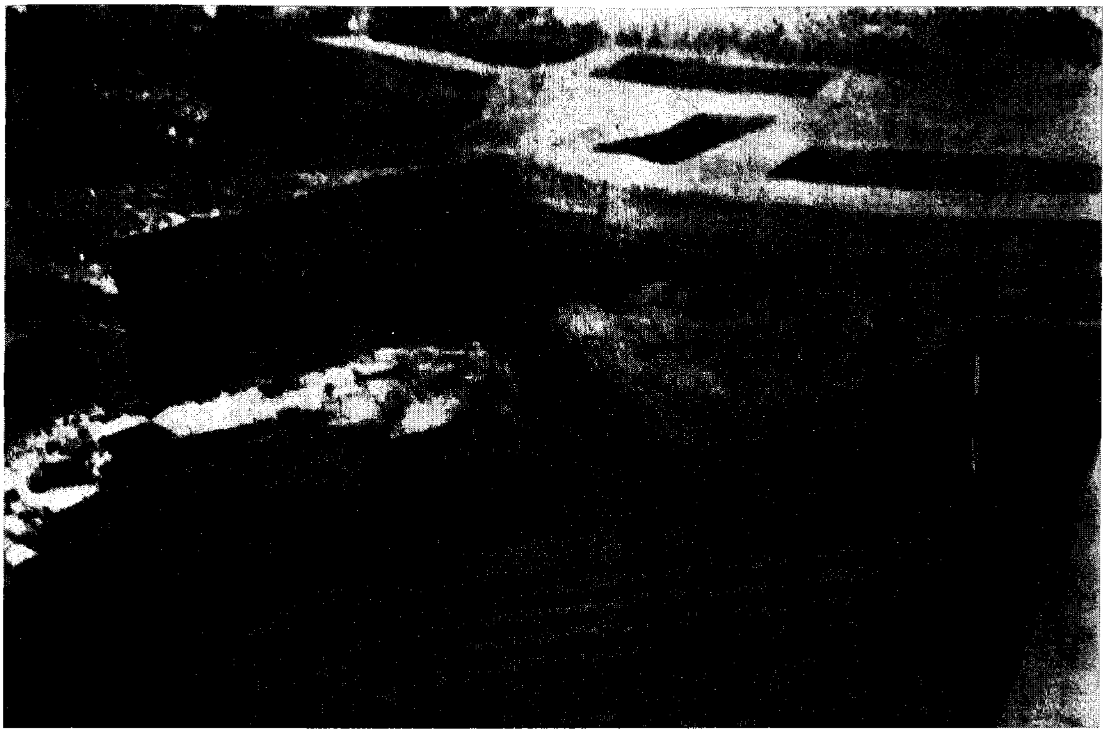

Figure 2.15 Wharf Found in Kaverippattinam Excavation
Source: Courtesy of the Archaeological Survey of India.

beginning of Hellenistic times.[27] In any case, a better awareness of the monsoon winds by this time (c. first century BCE) must have helped and made open sea navigation using the shortest route to the Indian peninsula easier.

The recent discovery of ostracons and an amphora fragment, with graffiti in the Tamil-Brahmi script of the first century CE, on the Red Sea coast also points to the south Indian people being in close contact with Arabia. The Tamil personal names Kaṇan, Cātan, and Koṟpumān (names indicating trader's community) are inscribed on them (Sidebotham 1991; Mahadevan 2003: 49). In Kolhapur in southern Maharashtra, about ten pieces of Roman bronzes, including a famous statuette of Poseidon belonging to the first century CE or earlier, were discovered (De Puma 1991).

Though the evidence of trade between Rome and south India as seen above seems to suggest the development of commercial and manufacturing activities in south India during this period, some scholars do not agree with such an interpretation as far as Tamilakam (Tamil Nadu and Kerala) is concerned. According to Rajan Gurukkal and R. Champakalakshmi

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[27] It is now believed that the term *hypalos*, meaning wind, was mistakenly taken to be the name of a person named Hippalos by some emendation of the text in Pliny's *Natural History*, which refers to the wind by the former term (Romanis and Tchernia 1997: 11–40; 250–6). In the *Periplus* too, only a wind is mentioned without attributing its discovery to a person by the name Hippalos.

(Gurukkal 2010: 22 and 147; Champakalakshmi 1996: 92–117) the classical Tamil literary works (Sangam literature) suggest that production (including agriculture) during the Sangam period was mostly organized on the basis of kinship labour, and that large-scale production, which involved class relationships, did not develop until the post-Sangam period. In Sangam society, where gift giving was the predominant way of redistributing wealth, the idea of price and profit was not current and overseas exchange did not stimulate either the transformation of prevailing economic or social relations. Both scholars infer that trade was organized mostly by the foreign merchants (Yavanas) themselves and though both acknowledge the transformation towards the end of the Sangam period, this point should be studied in greater detail and compared with the situation in the Deccan. The study must also take into consideration recent archaeological discoveries in South and Southeast Asia that suggest that the start of relations between the two regions could be traced well before the beginning of the Common Era, as seen in the following subsection. Romila Thapar discusses differences across regions in the impact on local societies and economies of the period as a consequence of Roman trade and India's contacts with Southeast Asia (Thapar 1997).

2.6.2 Contact with Southeast Asia

We shall now turn our attention towards the East and take a look at south India's relationship with Southeast Asia. There are many legends in the epics and the *Jātakas* which tell of the existence of a land of gold (*suvarṇa-bhūmi*) or a gold island (*suvarṇa-dvīpa*) in the East and of the venturing out of Indian merchants and adventurers for the East across the sea without fear of storms and shipwrecks. In ancient Chinese records, there are some descriptions of the country called Fu-nan which was founded in the lower Mekong valley in Cambodia by one Hun-shen (zhen/tian) coming from outside, and defeating and marrying a female ruler of the locality. Many scholars in the past considered that Hun-tian (Kon-dien in the Wade-Giles Romanizing system) represents Kaundinya, a Brahmana, who came from India, probably in the first century, but there is no evidence for verifying such interpretation and present-day scholars regard him as a Southeast Asian coming from somewhere in the Malay peninsula (Vickery 2003). However, there is a clear statement in one of the Chinese records that an Indian Brahmana called Kiao-chen-ru[28] was chosen by the people of Fu-nan as the king in the latter half of the fourth or the first half of the fifth century and he changed all the laws to conform to the system of India.

From Oc-eo, which is considered to have been a port of Fu-nan, and its vicinity in the Mekong delta in Vietnam, many articles brought from India, Rome, and China have been discovered. They include two Roman gold medallions of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius (both second century),[29] a Chinese bronze mirror of the Late Han dynasty ascribable to the late second century, amulets/stamps of copper/semi-precious stone (such as carnelian) with Prakrit/Sanskrit inscriptions ascribable to the third and fourth centuries and after,[30] and also bronze Buddha and Vishnu statues of the fourth or fifth centuries (Figures 2.16 and 2.17). It seems from these discoveries that Oc-eo began to function as a port for trade with

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[28] The Chinese name Kiao-chen-ru (Chiao-chen-ju) is interpreted as representing Kaundinya (Coedes 1968: 56).

[29] The original Roman coins may have been remade as medallions in India and brought to Oc-eo later.

[30] As for similar objects found in India, see Thaplyal 1972: 325, Dani 1986: 328 and Mahadevan 2003: 50.

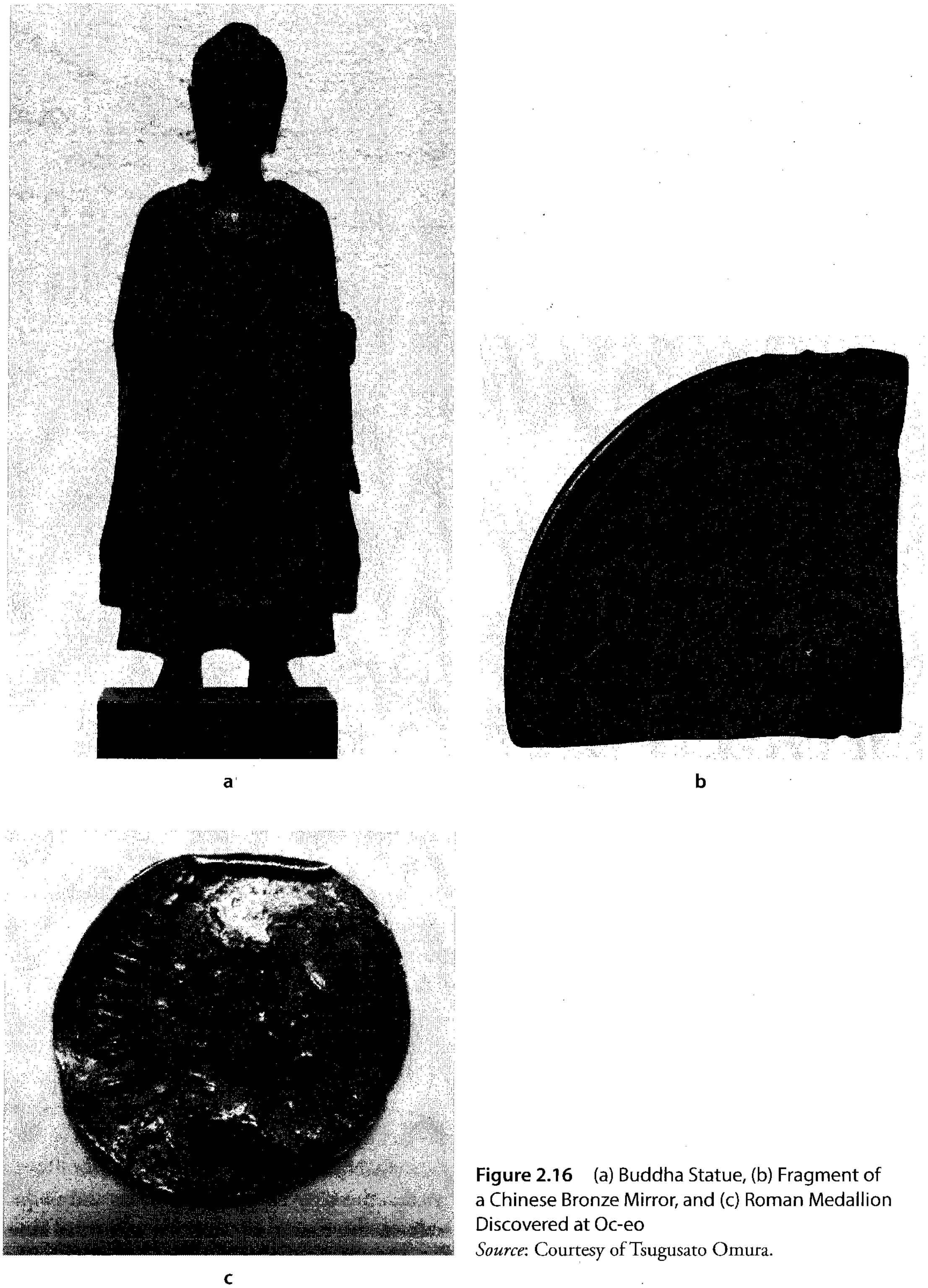
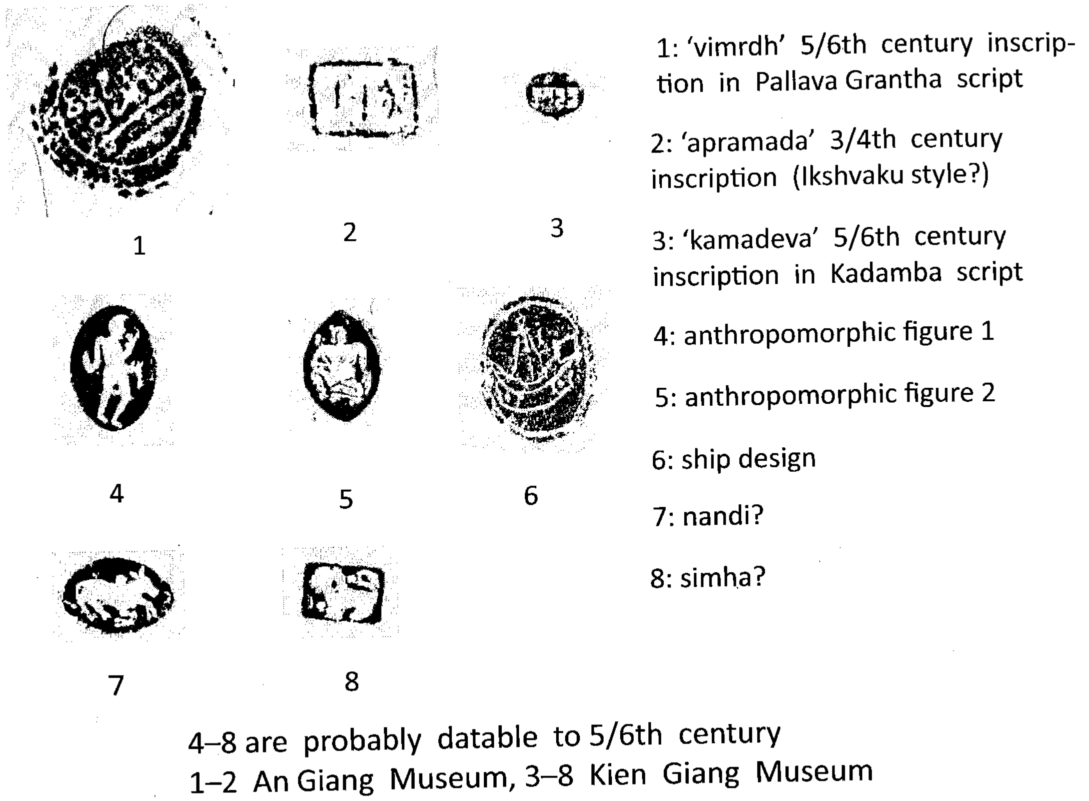


Figure 2.16 (a) Buddha Statue, (b) Fragment of a Chinese Bronze Mirror, and (c) Roman Medallion Discovered at Oc-eo
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.



1: 'vimrdh' 5/6th century inscription in Pallava Grantha script

2: 'apramada' 3/4th century inscription (Ikshvaku style?)

3: 'kamadeva' 5/6th century inscription in Kadamba script

4: anthropomorphic figure 1

5: anthropomorphic figure 2

6: ship design

7: nandi?

8: simha?

4–8 are probably datable to 5/6th century
1–2 An Giang Museum, 3–8 Kien Giang Museum

Figure 2.17 Amulets/Stamps of Copper/Precious Stone Discovered in Mekong Delta in Vietnam
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

India in the second or third century. The trade was strengthened from the middle of the fourth century, probably by taking advantage of monsoon winds for navigation in the Bay of Bengal. Fu-nan continued to have close relations with India for some centuries until it was overpowered by Zhen-la in the seventh century (Coedes 1966: 57–63).

As stated earlier, the activities of later Satavahana kings were more conspicuous in the Andhra country in eastern Deccan. They began constructing Buddhist *stūpas* in Amaravati and seem to have established contacts with Southeast Asian countries. A bronze statue of the standing Buddha discovered in Oc-eo resembles the Amaravati style, though the statue seems to have been cast locally (Malleret 1960: 202–3). The later Satavahana kings issued lead or bronze coins depicting two-masted ships. A stone seal discovered in Nakon Pathom in Thailand has the same design. Satavahana bronze coins bear a high proportion of tin, which seems to have been imported from Thailand or Malaysia where there were many tin mines.

In several places in Southeast Asia one finds stone inscriptions in Sanskrit and/or Tamil. In Vo-canh in southern coastal Vietnam, a Sanskrit inscription in the Southern Brahmi script used in the early Pallava inscriptions and assignable to the fourth century, refers to the king, Śrī Māra, who was identified by G. Coedes as Fan Shih-man, the Fu-nan king described in the Chinese sources (Coedes 1968: 40). In the My-son area in central coastal Vietnam there are extant some fourth-century Sanskrit inscriptions that refer to the Cham king called Bhadravarman who built a Siva temple installing a *linga* to worship Bhadrēśvara (Coedes 1966: 64–5). A little later, in the fifth century, Sanskrit inscriptions were engraved on stones, both in Kutei in eastern Kalimantan and Bogor in western Java (Figure 2.18). The seven Kutei inscriptions reveal the foundation of a kingdom spanning three generations of rulers, the first with a Tamil or local name (Kuṇḍunga), the second and third with Tamilized Sanskrit names, Aśvavarman and Mūlavarman respectively, showing their acculturation with things Indian in the process of forming a state. The three Bogor inscriptions praise Pūrṇavarman, king of Tārumānagara, as the incarnation of Vishnu. While the Bogor inscriptions were engraved in the Southern Brahmi script, as was the Vo-canh inscription, the Kutei inscriptions were in the Kadamba box-head script. These inscriptions, therefore, suggest that south India played an important role in the process of early state formation in Southeast Asia.

This 'Indian cultural influence' seen in the process of state formation in Southeast Asia led to the expressions 'Indian colony' or 'Greater India' being used in the past by scholars. This has recently invited severe criticism (Manguin et al. 2011: Introduction), and even the word 'Indianization' that was used by later scholars has begun to be re-examined. According to current understanding, south India and Southeast Asia were both at the stage of early state formation in the first half of the first millennium. They were both influenced by north Indian culture during the period from the Mauryas to the Guptas (Kulke 2012). However, the states thus formed in south India and Southeast Asia seem to have been different in their rule and structure, although both bore the same cultural influence.[31] This point should be studied and discussed further, together with the suitability of the expression 'Indianization'.

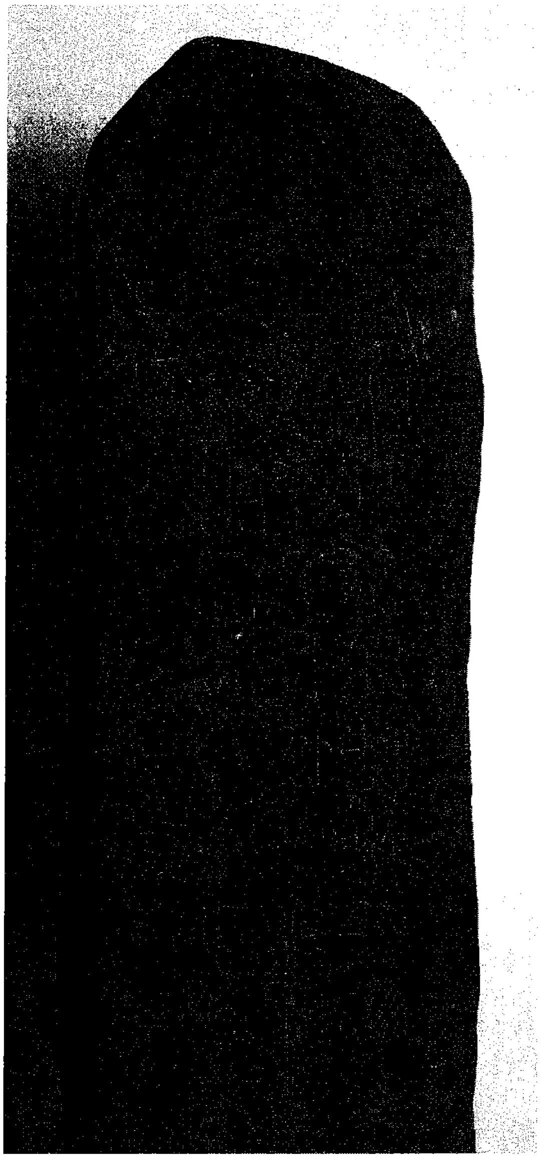


Figure 2.18 Kutei Stone Inscription in Jakarta Museum
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

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[31] The difference seems to have derived from the absence or non-implantation of the caste system in Southeast Asia.

In relation to this point, recent archaeological excavations in Southeast Asia have revealed that cultural contacts between India and Southeast Asia started earlier than the so-called Indianization period. For example, rouletted wares were also found in Bali, Java, and Vietnam. Excavations conducted in a burial site at Ban Don Ta Phet in west-central Thailand and in a settlement site of Khan Sam Kaeo in the Malay peninsula, both sites dated to between the fourth and second centuries BCE, have yielded metallic vessels and some specific hard stone and glass ornaments, which highlight relations with India including the exchange of materials, manufacturing technology and religious ideas (Glover and Bellina 2011). This evidence reveals the existence of inter-regional networks and sustained relationships between India and Southeast Asia a few centuries before the beginning of the Common Era which must have been the extension of the regional commercial network in India mentioned earlier (section 1.3).

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CHAPTER 3

Sixth Century to Ninth Century

The New-Type States and the Bhakti *Movement*

3.1 THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW TYPE OF STATE

NOBORU KARASHIMA

In the sixth century, there emerged a new type of state in the Deccan and further south showing both discontinuities as well as continuities with states that had emerged in these areas from the third century onwards (section 2.4). Three of them, the Chalukyas of Badami in the western Deccan, the Pallavas of Kanchi, and the Pandyas in Madurai (both in the Tamil country) grew to be fairly big states and fought each other over south Indian hegemony from the beginning of the sixth till the ninth century (the Badami Chalukyas were replaced by the Rashtrakutas in the middle of the eighth century). One of the important factors for the establishment of their power might have been an environment within their territory conducive to the growth of agriculture. The Pallavas, for instance, took much pains to expand the cultivated area by developing irrigation facilities in the form of reservoirs. A few other states, like the Gangas of Talakad, and the Telugu Cholas of Renandu, sandwiched between the bigger ones, remained minor states. All these states came more and more under the spell of the Vedic and agamic religion, Hinduism in a broad sense, and som of them started to have an indifferent or hostil attitude towards the Sramanic Buddhism an Jainism. In the south, the spread of Hinduis was accelerated by the *bhakti* movement tha enthused the common people. Here, in thi section, we shall study the political history the period from the sixth to the ninth centur and consider both the kingship of the new typ of state and the *bhakti* movement in subsequen sections.

Among the three major states, the Pallava appeared first at the end of the third centur as successors to the Ikshvakus in souther Andhradesa and showing much north India influence. As for their origin, some early scholars suggested that they migrated to India fro outside and identified them with the Pahlava but many scholars are now inclined to regar them indigenous to south India or with som mixture of north Indian blood (Mahalinga 1969: 21–4).

The early history of the Pallavas from th third to the beginning of the sixth century given in section 2.4. The Pallankoyil copper plates, the earliest Tamil copper plates assigned to the middle of the sixth century (*TASSI*, 1958/59: 41–110), record a land grant to a Jain temple near Kanchipuram by Simhavarman, the Pallava king and father of Simhavishnu (560–80). The latter is said to have conquered the Chola country up to the Kaveri and also perhaps fought the Kalabhras, according to later copper-plate inscriptions. In the north too he defeated his opponents. He opened a new epoch for the Pallavas and was followed by his son, Mahendravarman I (580–630), whom Appar, a famous *bhakti* saint, is said to have converted from Jainism to Saivism. During Mahendravarman's reign a new architectural style was introduced, namely the cave temples found at several places including Mamallapuram, the main port of the Pallavas.[1] At the same time, however, war broke out between the Pallavas and the Chalukyas of northern Karnataka.

The Chalukyas grew into a power in the middle of the sixth century under Pulakesin I who, in Badami, constructed a fort on a horseshoe-shaped hill surrounding a lake and open to the town, and declared independence from the Kadambas by performing an *aśvamēdha* (Figure 3.1). Pulakesin I's grandson, Pulakesin II (609–42), extended his rule to the Konkan, and defeated, on the banks of the Narmada, the army of Harshavardhana who tried to invade Karnataka. The kings of Malwa, Kalinga, and the eastern Deccan submitted to Pulakesin II. Though he attacked Kanchipuram, Mahendravarman was able to thwart the attack and this was the beginning of the long struggle between the Chalukyas and the Pallavas.

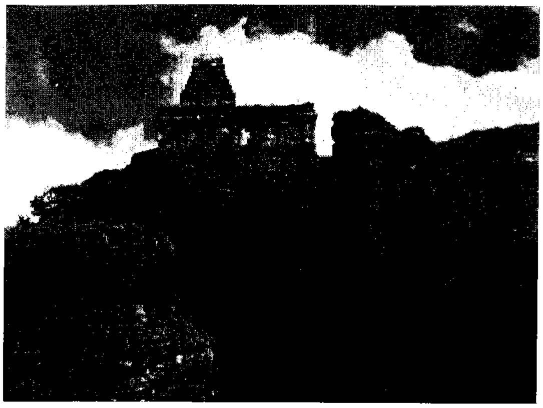

Figure 3.1 Malegitti Sivalaya Temple at Badami
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

After intermittent battles, Narasimhavarman I (630–68), the Pallava king, attacked and occupied Badami, and engraved an inscription on a rock there to commemorate his victory. Pulakesin II died in the battle. It was during this period that Xuanzang (Hsüan-tsang; Yuan Chwang), a Chinese monk who studied Buddhism at the Nalanda monastery, also travelled in the south, including Kanchipuram and Badami in his itinerary (see Map 3.1). His visit to Badami was just before the attack on the city by Narasimhavarman. Xuanzang stated that there were more than one hundred Buddhist and over eighty Hindu temples in Kanchipuram (Watters 1905: 226).

In the Pandyan country, Kadungon (590–620) was the ruler who revived the dynastic power of the Pandyas towards the end of the sixth century. In a later copper-plate inscription (Velvikudi inscription, *EI*, xvii, 16) he appears as the 'destroyer' of the Kalabhra kings who had been dubbed anti-Brahmanical. From these references in the Pandyan and Pallava inscriptions, the Kalabhras were believed to have been Buddhists or Jains and to have harassed the Hindus, but a set of inscriptions recently discovered in Pulangurichi (*Avanam*, 1: 57–69;

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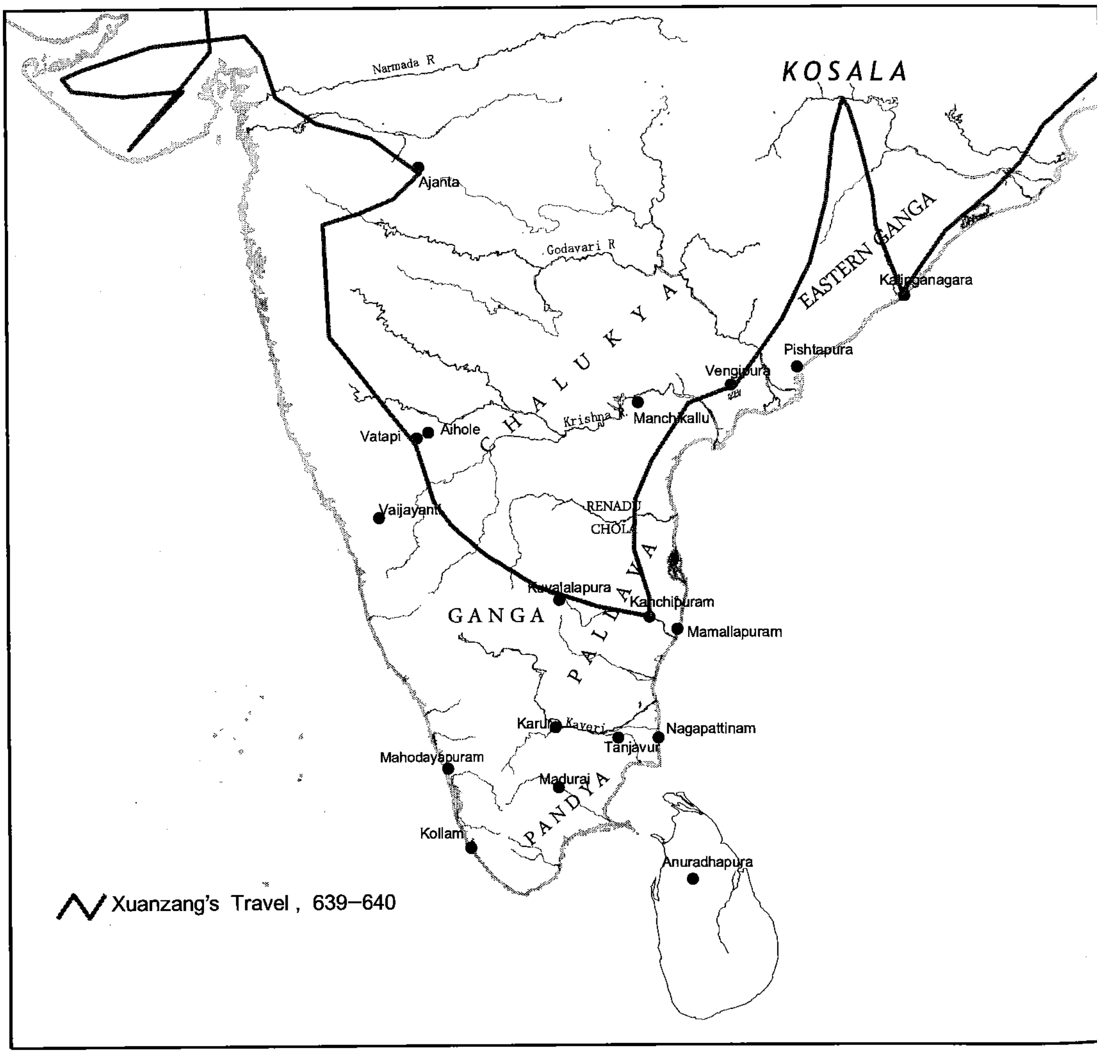
[1] Recent excavations in Mamallapuram reveal the foundation of a large brick structure which might have been a temple or a public building going back to early Pallava times (Rajavelu 2008).


Narmada R
KOSALA
Ajanta
Godavari R
EASTERN GANGA
Kalinganagara
CHALUKYA
Pishtapura
Vengipura
Manchikallu
Krishna
Aihole
Vatapi
Vaijayanti
RENADU
CHOLA
PALLAVA
Kuvalalapura
Kanchipuram
GANGA
Mamallapuram
Karur
Kaveri
Nagapattinam
Tanjavur
Mahodayapuram
Madurai
PANDYA
Kollam
Anuradhapura
Xuanzang's Travel, 639–640

Map 3.1 South India, 550–850 CE
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

Subbarayalu 2012: 27–37) records that Cēndan Kūṟṟan and Cēndan, who are supposed to have been Kalabhra kings, took care of one Jain and two other religious (not specified as Jain or Buddhist) institutions. This may advise us to alter the past notion that the Kalabhras were oppressors of Hinduism. The third king of the Pandyas, Sendan (654–70), extended his rule to the Chera country, and the fourth, Arikesari Maravarman (670–700), fought battles against the Pallavas.

Narasimhavarman I of the Pallavas, who sacked Badami, claimed to have defeated the Cholas, Cheras, Kalabhras, and also Pandyas. He constructed many rock-cut Siva temples in the kingdom after his conversion to Saivism. During the reign of his grandson, Paramesvaravarman I (670–700), Vikramaditya of the

Chalukya dynasty invaded the Pallava country and pitched battles were fought on the banks of the Kaveri involving the Gangas and probably the Pandyas too as his allies. However, the next five decades under the rule of the Chalukyan Vinayaditya (681–96) and Vijayaditya (696–734) and their contemporary, the Pallava Narasimhavarman II Rajasimha (700–28) were rather peaceful. During this period, the Shore Temple and the Kailasanatha temple were built at Mamallapuram and Kanchipuram respectively, and at Pattadakal and Aihole too many new temples were constructed, including the famous Durga Temple in Aihole (see Figure 3.2). Dandin, the great rhetorician and the author of *Daśakumāracarita*, seems to have spent some years at the Pallava court.

Narasimhavarman II was succeeded by his son Paramesvaravarman II, but when the latter died in a battle with a Ganga ruler who assisted Vikramaditya II, a crisis arose over the succession, as Paramesvara had died without an heir. Though there were some princes related to Paramesvara, the officials (*māttras*) acting in concert with the college (*ghaṭika*) of learned Brahmanas and the people (*mūlaprakritis*) chose a young prince of a collateral line, Nandivarman (II) Pallavamalla (731–96), the twelve-year-old son of Hiranyavarman. This story is narrated in the sculptured panels of the Vaikunthaperumal Temple built by Nandivarman II in Kanchipuram (see Figure 3.3) and in some copper-plate inscriptions. From the name of his father, Hiranyavarman, and other evidence, scholars suggest that this collateral line of the Pallavas existed in Cambodia in

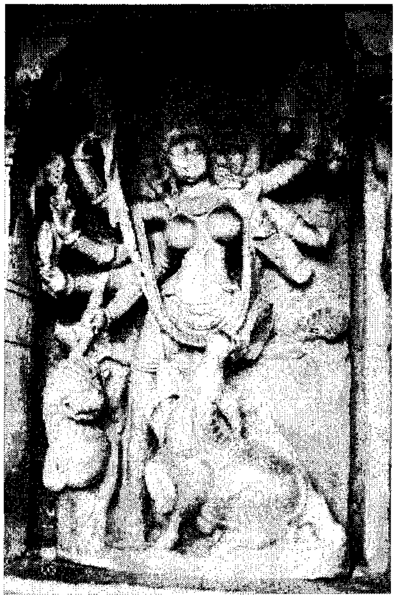


Figure 3.2 Durga Temple Panel at Aihole
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

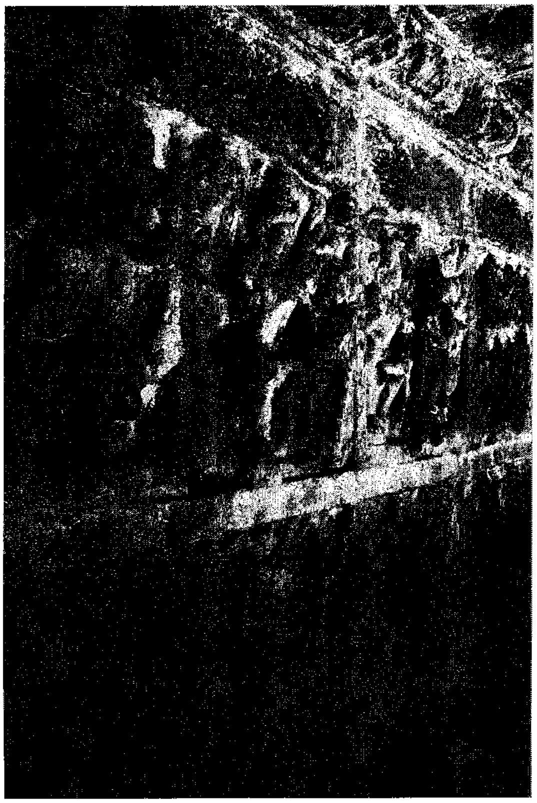


Figure 3.3 Sculptured Panel (the Fourth) of Vaikuntaperumal Temple
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

Southeast Asia.[2] However, there is no evidence to prove this, though the Pallavas and other south Indian dynasties of this period had close relations with Southeast Asian countries.[3]

In the Chalukya country, Vikramaditya II ascended the throne in 733/4, and invaded Kanchipuram immediately after. The young Pallava king, Nandivarman II, seems to have had a very difficult time for about twenty years or so, fighting against the Chalukyas, the Gangas, and the Pandyas, and even against a Pallava prince who, backed by the Chalukyas and others, claimed the Pallava throne. During that period, Nandivarman seems to have been helped by Dantidurga of the Rashtrakuta family, an erstwhile feudatory of the Chalukyas. Around 760, Nandivarman defeated the Gangas, but was unable to restrain the growing power of the Pandyas under the reign of Maravarman Rajasimha (730–65) followed by Nedunjadaiyan, alias Varagunavarman I (765–815).

In the Deccan, Vikramaditya was succeeded by his son, Kirtivarman II (744/5–55). He lost his southern territory as a result of his conflict with the Pandyas, and was the last Chalukyan king, his power undermined by the Rashtrakuta Dantidurga (752–6) who increased his sway by successfully fighting against the Gurjaras in Malwa and the rulers of Kosala and Kalinga. With the Pallavas, however, he maintained good relations and gave his daughter in marriage to Nandivarman II. He was followed by his uncle, Krishna I (756–75), who subdued the Gangas and also the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi, and is known as the builder of the Kailasa Temple at Ellora. His son, Dhruva (780–92), and grandson, Govinda III (792–814), consolidated the strength of the Rashtrakutas by defeating north Indian powers, including the ruler of Kanauj and his protector, Dharmapala of Bengal. Govinda III invaded Kanchipuram too, defeating Dantivarman (796–847), who had succeeded Nandivarman II.

During the long reign of Dantivarman, the Pallava territory was reduced by the aggression of the Pandyas from the south and the Rashtrakutas from the north. The Telugu-Chodas in the southern Andhra country extended their rule to Tondaimandalam. Nandivarman III (846–69), son of Dantivarman, however, was able to defeat the Pandyas and the Telugu-Chodas by securing help from the Gangas, the Cholas (who were gaining power in the Kaveri delta), and even the Rashtrakutas. However, Aparajita, grandson of Nandivarman III, was killed by Aditya I of the Cholas who invaded Tondaimandalam. That was the end of the Pallava rule.

Returning to Pandyan history, Varagunavarman I invaded the Pallava country and annexed the Kongu region. He also extended his rule over Venad, the southern part of Kerala. His son, Srimara Srivallabha (815–62) invaded Sri Lanka during the reign of Sena I and sacked his capital, Anuradhapura. Srimara, however, was defeated in the battle with Nripatunga (859–99), the Pallava king who succeeded Nandivarman III. Madurai, the Pandyan capital, was sacked by Sena II of Sri Lanka, the successor of Sena I, and Varagunavarman II was installed by the Sri Lankan army as the successor of Srimara who died soon after.

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[2] According to T. N. Subramaniam, the name of Hiranyavarman was popular in Cambodia (Subramaniam 1967: 94). For the connection of Nandivarman II with Cambodia, see also Mahalingam (1969: 137–85).

[3] There are many Tamil and Sanskrit inscriptions of the Pallava period in Southeast Asia, the script and contents of which show their close relation with south India. The Takua Pa inscription in Thailand, which refers to Avaninarayana, one of the epithets of Nandivarman III, is one such example (Karashima 2002).

Though Kerala seems to have been under the rule of the Chera Perumals during the period when the three great powers were fighting each other, little is known about its history until the beginning of the ninth century. In 825, a local era called the Kollam Era came into currency. There are many theories regarding its origin but, according to M. G. S. Narayanan, it commemorated the foundation of Kollam harbour city after the liberation of Venad from the Pandyan rule (Narayanan 1996: 34–5).

3.2 KINGSHIP AND STATECRAFT

NOBORU KARASHIMA

Compared with the kingdoms of the Sangam period, the new kingdoms that struggled for hegemony over south India from the sixth century onwards were very different in their kingship and statecraft. As stated earlier in Chapter 2, the influence of north Indian political culture was already seen in the Deccan in the Satavahana state established during the first century BCE. Their kings are known to have performed the *aśvamēdha* (horse sacrifice) and other Vedic sacrifices. In the Tamil country also, north Indian influence was clearly seen in the rule of the Pallavas that began in the third century CE, as indicated in their early Prakrit and Sanskrit copper-plate charters. Sivaskandavarman, who issued a copper-plate charter in Prakrit to confirm a land grant by a former king to certain Brahmanas, is stated in the charter to be a *dhamma-mahārājādhirāja* (righteous, supreme king of great kings) and a performer of the *aśvamēdha* and other Vedic sacrifices.

The north Indian influence on dynastic rule continued in the succeeding period—both in the Deccan, and in Tamilagam. In the sixth century, Pulakesin I, the founder of the Chalukyan dynasty in the Deccan, was given the title of *dharmamahārāja* (righteous great king), besides *raṇavikrama* (valiant in war) in later inscriptions (*EI*, xxviii, 10: pp. 59–62), and is known to have performed the *aśvamēdha* and other Vedic sacrifices, including *hiraṇyagarbha*.[4] Though there is no Pandyan inscription recording the performance of the *aśvamēdha* sacrifice by its kings, Arikesari Maravarman (670–700) is known to have performed the *hiraṇyagarbha* sacrifice. These inscriptions prove that the kings of the three states followed the north Indian practice of legitimizing their rule through the adoption of these Brahmanic titles and the performance of Vedic sacrifices.

However, what distinguishes the rule of the three kingdoms in and after the sixth century from that of the earlier Satavahana/Sangam/early-Pallava period is the introduction of Hinduism and the rapid rise and spread of the *bhakti* movement. Though the kings of the earlier period followed Brahmanical political practice, Sramanic religions such as Jainism and Buddhism were also quite influential.[5] In the Tamil country, traditional local deities continued to be worshipped during the Sangam and post-Sangam (early Pallava) periods. This situation changed around the fifth/sixth century with the introduction of Hinduism, which had developed from Brahmanism during the Gupta period in north India with new puranic deities and agamic temple rituals and by incorporating various local religious traditions.

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[4] A ceremony in which a king crawled through a vessel made of gold and the vessel, after the ceremony, was broken for distribution to Brahmanas.

[5] Burton Stein emphasizes the Jain influence on south Indian kingship in the period from the post-Sangam kings to the Cholas (Stein 1978).

In the Tamil country, the new Hindu deities, Siva and Vishnu, were connected to the traditional deities. Mayon, a deified cowherd hero in the *mullai* (forests), was equated with Vishnu. Murugan, another hunter hero in the *kuriñji* (hills) deified as the god of love and war, was considered to be Skanda or Subrahmanya, namely a son of Siva, and Korravai, a goddess of victory in the *pālai* (desert) and mother of Murugan, was identified with the consort of Siva by the seventh century (Gurukkal 2010: 187; Champakalakshmi 2011: 55–6; Mahalakshmi 2011: 98). Temples were constructed or renovated at sites sacred to these Hinduized traditional deities. Many Siva and Vishnu temples were also built in other places that had no such traditional sacred connections.[6] The Tamil people thus accepted the Hinduism that had merged with the Tamil religious tradition. Consequently, there was a flourishing of the *bhakti* movement in the country. The story of the conversion of Mahendravarman I (580–630) from Jainism to Saivism by Appar, a famous *bhakti* saint, is the first evidence of its influence in the political sphere. The Pandyan king Nedumaran is also said to have changed his faith from Jainism to Saivism, influenced by Sambandar, another *bhakti* saint.

As we shall see in the section dealing with the *bhakti* movement, the conflict between Hinduism and Sramanic religions for hegemony continued during this period, leading to the decline of the latter in and after th tenth century. However, Jainism in Karnatak retained its strength even afterwards. Thoug the north Indian Brahmanical tradition merge with Tamil religious tradition,[7] the influence o the former was enhanced by the spread of it new and renovated form, namely Hinduism The kings of the three kingdoms continued t conduct Vedic sacrifices, including the *rājasūy* (royal coronation) and made large-scale lan grants to Brahmanas and to Hindu temples Nandivarman II, who ascended the thron in 731, invited a large number of Brahmana specialized in Vedic studies from the north t create Brahmana villages (*brahmadēyas*) in th Tamil country. This policy of his seems to hav anticipated that of the Chola kings of the tent and eleventh centuries.

The north Indian influence thus effecte a drastic change on south Indian kingshi and states, particularly on those in the Tami country. Rajan Gurukkal regards this as reflection of the transition from 'chiefdom' t 'state' that occurred in relation to the chang in the system of production, and the social formation brought about by the development o agriculture (Gurukkal 2010: 182–223). This i an important and debatable point,[8] though w cannot deny the fact that remarkable development in agricultural production did take plac during this period. In the Deccan, as state earlier, political change was seen from the tim of the Satavahanas, that is, even before th beginning of the Common Era.

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[6] This period witnessed technical advancement. Masonry improved and, from the seventh century, temples started to be built in the plains from cut stones and not just carved into rocky hills; consequently the number of temples increased considerably.

[7] In this period, copper-plate charters began to b written bilingually using a combination of Sanskr and Tamil, symbolizing the merging of northern an southern cultural traditions.

[8] In section 2.3, Subbarayalu is inclined to interpr the three powers as kingdoms, while Gurukkal tak them as chiefdoms.

The changes in kingship and statecraft that occurred during the Pallava period have attracted the attention of many Indologists and anthropologists in the last forty years and they have discussed the issue variously in relation to the changes seen in the rituals related to kings (Karashima 1999: 1–16). According to Nicholas Dirks (Dirks 1976), for example, the sacrifice (*yajña*) was extremely important for kings of the early Pallava period, as it was the only way to make a person king. However, from the seventh century onwards, more certainly from the reign of Nandivaraman II, the concept of a sacred lineage of kings starting from Vishnu became significant for sovereignty. In accordance with this transition, the meaning and function of giving gifts (*dāna*) also changed from the offerings (*dakshiṇa*) to God and Brahmanas to gaining sanction from local powers in order to become king and share sovereignty with them. *Dāna* gained new importance,[9] and this change was closely related to changes in the political formation and enlarged the political circle that could participate in the royal rituals to include local chiefs too. Ronald Inden states that it is related to the transition from the Vedic 'sacrifice' in Brahmanism to the 'worship' (*pūja*) in Hinduism (Inden 1978).

Some scholars have been interested in the relations between the king and the Brahmanas expressed in the rituals performed in the king's installation ceremony (*rājasūya*). Though there is a difference of opinion among scholars on the point as to whether the king or the Brahmana is superior of the two, according to J. C. Heesterman, who discussed the issue of authority (Heesterman 1978; 1985), the kings with political power and the Brahmanas with religious authority were separate and belonged to mutually exclusive categories. There was really no solution to their conflict over hegemony, and this hindered the creation of a consistent theory of kingship in India. David Shulman, who studied south Indian myth and poetry, states: 'The spiritual powers of the Brahmin and the martial or administrative talents of the king are not permanently distinct and opposite forces but internally divided and mutually dependent symbolic clusters.' They are regarded by him as interpenetrative and transformational (Shulman 1985: 40).

Whatever the conceptual relations between a king and the Brahmanas might have been, their actual relations were mutually dependent in the long course of history. A king needed the authority of the Brahmanas for the legitimation of his sovereignty and the Brahmanas had to depend on the king's support for their living. Though this was part of the structure of the pre-modern Hindu society based on *varṇāśrama-dharma*, the relation took on a special feature during the later Pallava and early Chola period as indicated, for example, by the establishment of so many *brahmadēya* villages during this time. We should pay due attention also to this politico-economic change in kingship.

For a study of the historical aspects of kingship, such as a king's politico-economic relations with the Brahmanas, as well as other communities, we need to examine the king's political power, particularly the power exercised in the local administration of the kingdom, and this can be described also as relations between the centre and the periphery in a state. As we shall see later (section 4.2), while Burton Stein was of the view that the king did not wield political power in the state but did have religious authority, Dirks, who discussed the importance of *dāna* in the later Pallava period, stressed the importance

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[9] For the importance of *dāna* in the prior periods, see Thapar (1976).

of the correlation between the two, namely religious authority and political power. He states, 'There was a definite relation between the modes of social and political relations on the one hand and ideas and ritual expressions of authority on the other. The correlations are imperative for this period of south Indian history'[10] (Dirks 1976: 156). We shall discuss this issue, however, in relation to Stein's 'segmentary state' theory later in section 4.2.

The above issue of legitimation of king's authority has recently attracted particular attention of scholars including David Beetham, H. Kulke, B. D. Chattopadhyaya, Rajan Gurukkal, and B. P. Sahu. In relation to the changing forms of patronage and legitimation Sahu states that 'a new legitimation structure was not usually imposed, nor was it easy to do so, but was designed to accommodate, incorporate and tap what was already available in local societies.. Legitimation entailed negotiations and integr tion of competing traditions' (Sahu 2013: 202

The concept of 'Sanskrit Cosmopolis' a enunciated by Sheldon Pollock (Pollock 1996 concerns also the discussed change in the Pallav period. According to him, the use of Sanskr in various states in South and Southeast Asi for the period between roughly 300 to 130 CE was only to articulate politics 'aestheticall and not materially. He examines the Pallav inscriptions in his argument for the emergenc in these regions of a pre-modern empire-systen in which Sanskrit played a crucial role in it cultural articulation. His discussion extends th issue of north Indian influence seen in soutl India to the Indian (north/south integrated influence witnessed in Southeast Asia. Cultura interaction between the northern and southerr parts of India, and also between South Asia anc Southeast Asia will be an important field o research in future.[11]

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[10] It is quite ironical that Dirks, who had attracted our attention to a historical change in kingship, was criticized for the ahistoricity shown in his study of the 'little kingdom' of the later period (Peabody 2003: 8, note 21).

[11] For a critical appraisal of this view, see Manguin (2011) and Kulke (2012), referred to in section 2.6.

3.3 AGRARIAN DEVELOPMENTS

NOBORU KARASHIMA

The wide spread of Brahmana settlements and Hindu temples in south India is a conspicuous feature of this period. There are many copper-plate inscriptions recording the grant of villages or land to Brahmanas by the Chalukya, Pallava, and Pandya kings and by their feudatories. Though the grants were made earlier by the Satavahanas and their successors in the Deccan and by the early Pallava kings in the Tamil country, their numbers increased remarkably from the sixth century. Temple construction for Siva and Vishnu, new Hindu deities, started or gained impetus also from the sixth century.[12] Consequently, more surplus agricultural production became necessary to support the livelihoods of Brahmanas and to maintain temples.

For this purpose, forests were reclaimed for cultivation. The first clear reference to forest reclamation in the Deccan is found in an inscription of the sixth century in the Goa area, which records the grant of an entitlement to a Brahmana to clear a forest and cultivate the land by employing labourers (Nandi 2000: 89). In Tamil Nadu, the Rayakota copper-plate inscription (*EI*, v, 8) of the eighth century in Salem district records a village grant to a Brahmana inclusive of felled jungle (*aṟu-kāḍu*) and burnt jungle (*eri-kāḍu*), which may be taken as indicating that the village granted was created by clearing forest. In the Bahur copper-plate inscription (*EI*, xviii, 2: CE 867) of Nripatungavarman of the Pallavas that records a royal grant of three villages to Brahmanas, we find the description of the land granted as follows:

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[12] In Kerala, no record of royal grant of villages to Brahmanas exists, but the spread of Brahmana settlements and temple construction was closely related and was in progress well before the ninth century (Gurukkal 1992: 29).

> Of the two [granted] villages, Vilangattangaduvanur and Settuppakkam, the eastern boundary is west of a forest (*kāḍu*).... The eastern boundary of Iraippunaichcheri [another granted village] is to the west of a forest surrounding the village (*nattam*).... Altogether, the land enclosed by the four great boundaries specified here, including wet land and dry land, villages and village buildings (*ūr-irukkai*), houses and house gardens, clearings and young trees, waste grounds for grazing, tanks, storehouses, ditches, wells, forests, brackish ground, water courses and breaches, wherever water is conducted, long harrows are applied, iguanas run, and tortoises creep, not excluding the cultivated land....

In many other inscriptions of this period, forests (*kāḍu*) are mentioned as the boundaries of villages granted, which indicates extension of cultivable land by clearing forests during the period.

Technological innovation in irrigation also contributed to the increase in agrarian productivity during this period and we find many references to water tanks (*ēri*, *taṭāka*, or *kuḷam*) in inscriptions (see Figures 3.4 and 3.5). In Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh, an inscription of the fifth century refers to a big tank (*mahā-taṭāka*) named Paruvi in connection with the grant of a paddy field to a Brahmana by a Western Ganga king (Madhava II) (Reddy 2010: 14; *EI*, xiv, p. 331). Likewise, in Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh, an inscription (*EI*, iii, 20) of Indravarman, an Eastern Ganga king of the sixth century, records a land grant to a Brahmana referring to a king's tank (*rāja-taṭāka*) probably constructed by Indravarman or one of his predecessors. Later, in the ninth and tenth centuries, there are epigraphical references in southern Karnataka also to tanks (*mahātaṭāka*, *galakkeṟe*, or *piriyakeṟe*) constructed by kings, officers, and local leaders (Adiga 2006: 40–5).

In Tondaimandalam (Pallava territory) too, as water supply from rivers was not available year round, huge tanks were built during this period. A copper-plate inscription (*EI*, viii, 12) of an early Pallava queen refers to Raja-tataka; Kasakudi plates of Nandivarman II (*SII*, ii, 342) mention Tiraiyan-eri constructed by a predecessor of Nandivarman II (731–96); and Kuram plates of Paramesvaravarman (*SII*, i, 151) refer to Paramesvara-tataka, evidently constructed by Paramesvaravarman (728–31). In Chengalpattu and North Arcot districts in Tamil Nadu, there are many large tanks, including Ten-eri identified with the above Tiraiyan-eri, Mahendra-tataka near Sholingur, and Vayiramegha-tataka in Uttiramerur, whose construction may be traced back to the Pallava period (Minakshi 1938: 94–9). In the Pandyan country also, many tanks were constructed from the eighth century onwards, as we shall see.

Channels (*kāl*, *vāykkāl*, or *aṟṟukkāl*) were dug to conduct water from rivers to these tanks and to draw water from rivers or tanks to fields for irrigation. *Nāṭṭukkāl* (water channel of the *nāḍu*) mentioned in the Kuram plates must have been the channel to draw water for

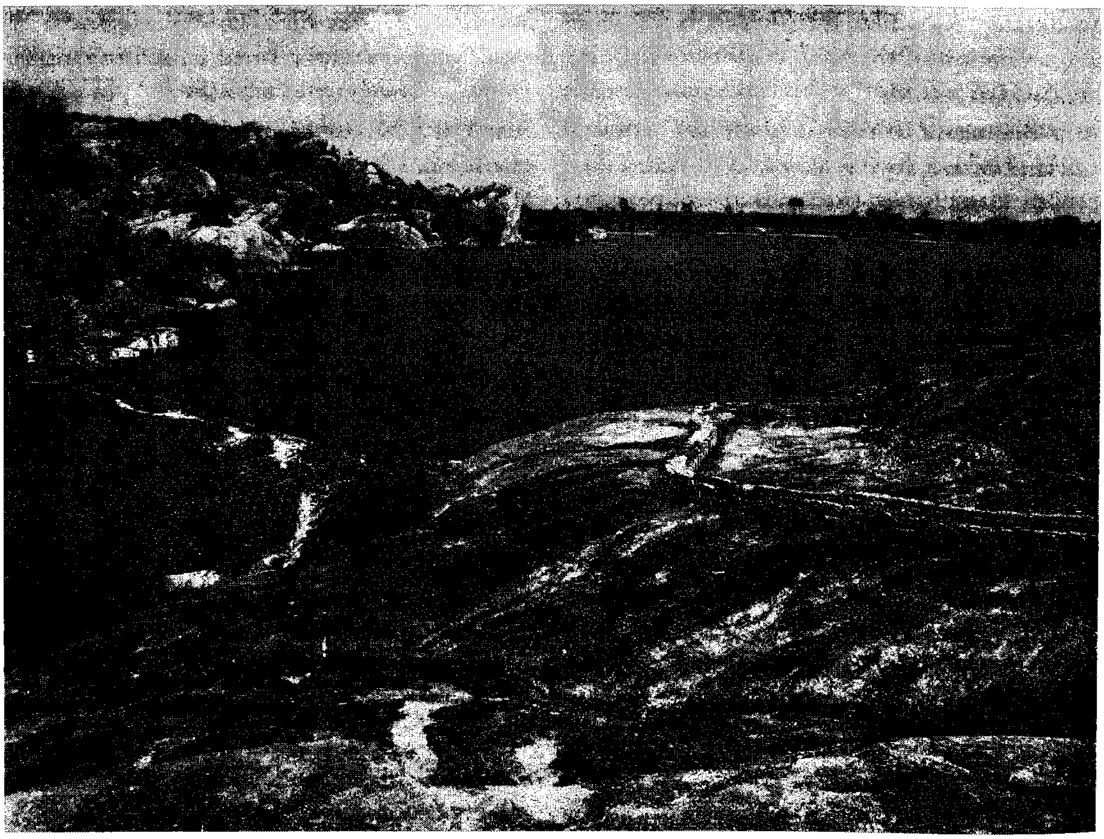

Figure 3.4 Irrigation Tank at Pulangurichi (c. Fifth Century)
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

irrigation from the Palar River to the *nāḍu* of the granted village. The same plates also mention a channel (Perumbidugu-kal) to feed water from the Palar to a tank (Paramesvara-tataka) in the granted village. A Pandyan inscription (c. 720) records the excavation of a channel (*kāl*) from the Vaigai River close to Madurai by a Pandyan king, Cendan Arikesari (Gurukkal 2010: 322). We can gather many more references to water channels in the inscriptions of the Pallavas, Pandyas, and the states in the Deccan, which indicate advanced irrigation technology during this period.

Another testimony to technological development is available from the reference to the sluices (*madagu*, *tūmbu*, or *kalingu*) attached to these tanks and water channels (Figure 3.6). In Karnataka, the first reference is found in an inscription of the middle eighth century (Nandi 2000: 93; *EC*, 10, Mulbagal 255) and in Tamil Nadu there are many references in Pallava inscriptions. The Pandyan inscription referred to above also records the construction of a sluice (*madagu*) in the Vaigai. During the reign of Srimara Srivallabha (c. 811–57), we find many records of construction of tanks in

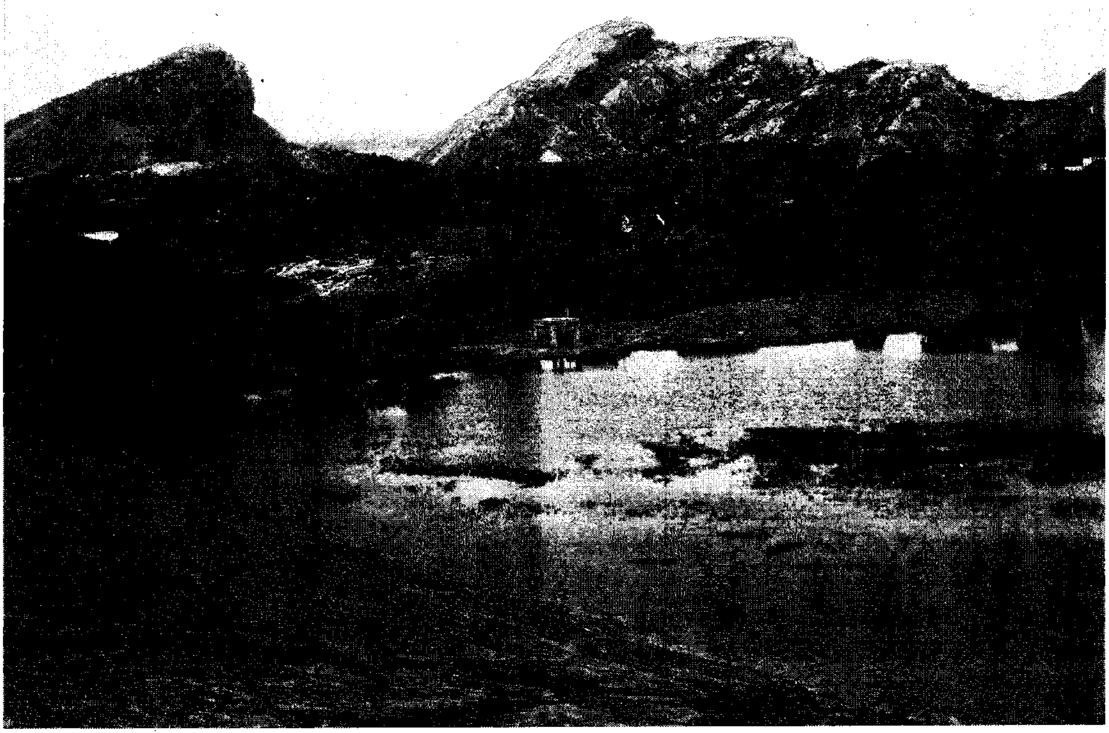

Figure 3.5 Irrigation Tank at Nattamalai (c. Eighth Century)
Source: Institut Français de Pondichéry.

the Pandyan country by a local chief who might have been conferred with the title of *kilavan*[13] by the king. The tanks he constructed were called *kilavan-ēri* (Gurukkal 2010: 323).

Before the introduction of the use of the sluice, which was constructed deep under water bodies and could be manipulated to control the flow and distribution of water from tanks, water must have been lifted with great effort from channels or tanks for irrigation by means of *picotah*s.[14] The sluice-making technique was common in south India and Sri Lanka, but the more advanced Sri Lankan technique seems to have been introduced very reluctantly in south India only during the Chola period. Leslie Gunawardana's field study identified the Sri Lankan type of sluice (which was made on the tank bund instead of in the interior of the tank) only in the Ponneri tank, which had been newly constructed during the time of Rajendra I for his new capital, Gangaikondacholapuram (Gunawardana:1984). The building of anicuts or dams across rivers, which started very early in Sri Lanka, was introduced in the Pandya area only in the twelfth century and after, and that technique was not employed by the Cholas.[15]

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[13] The word *kilavan* means 'possessor'; we can interpret it as a title given to a landowner, like *udaiyān*, but it seems to have also connoted 'headman' or a 'local magnate'.

[14] A *picotah* is a lever device for raising water with a leather basket.

[15] There is persuasive evidence to indicate that the famous Kallanai or Grand Anicut across the

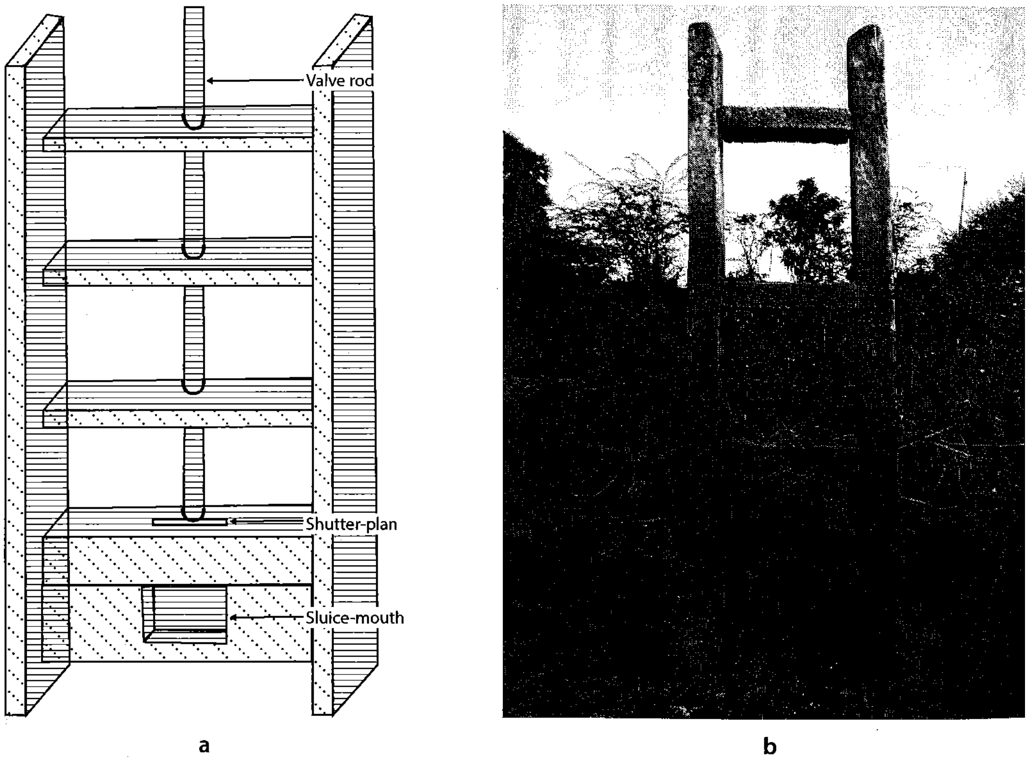

Figure 3.6 *Tūmbu*
Sources: (a) Gurukkal (2010); (b) courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

To control supply of water, particular care was given to the head sluice (*vāyttalai* or *talaivāy*). The Tandantottam plates of Nandivarman II (*SII*, ii, 99) record the assignment of a share of the village income for the upkeep of the *vāyttalai*. In an early Chola inscription from Allur (a non-Brahmana village) near Tiruchirappalli (*SII*, viii, 689) reference is made to the *talaivāchchānṟār*, who were responsible for managing the *talaivāy*. They were assigned land in the village for their work. Local institutions like *nāḍu*, *sabhā*, and *ūr* were important for the maintenance of these water facilities (Gurukkal 2010).

Uttiramerur, a *brahmadēya* (Brahmana village) in Chengalpattu district, which flourished during the Pallava and Chola periods, is famous for its many inscriptions that record various activities of its *sabhā*.[16] Among these inscriptions we find mention of a 'tank committee' (*ēri-vāriyam*) that managed the tank affai (*SII*, vi, 348).[17] In this village, land for padd cultivation was divided into a number of squa parcels called *sadukkam* that were numbere

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Kaveri came up only in the late fifteenth century or so (Subramanian 1983).

[16] Inscriptions were studied by Nilakanta Sas and Subrahmanya Aiyer (Sastri 1932: 96–175; Aiy 1967: 209–88). Town planning is found in Gros Nagaswamy (1970).

[17] Still extant in Uttramerur is a tank cal Vairameghatataka, which was probably construct during the Pallava period (Minakshi 1938: 97).

and linked to a drainage channel (*vadi*), feeder channels (*vāykkāl*) and/or branch channels (*kaṉṉāṟu*). A description of this in inscriptions is as follows (*SII*, iii, 154):

> Two hundred and ten *kuḻi*[18] in the first *sadukkam* (situated) west of (the drainage channel called) Paramesvara-vadi of the tenth *kaṉṉāṟu* north of the village; three hundred and eighty *kuḻi* of first-rate (land) in the fourth *sadukkam* (situated) east of (the channel) Vilakku-vaykkal of the third *kaṉṉāṟu* north of (the channel) Sridevi-vayakkal.

Similar descriptions are also found in other Brahmana villages, for example, Uttamasili-chaturvedimangalam (*SII*, iii, 111) in Tiruchirappalli district. These instances show that water management for cultivation in Brahmana villages that were newly established during the Pallava period was considerably well developed. This knowledge and practice spread soon to non-Brahmana villages too, as indicated by the reference in the foregoing account to *talaivāchchānṟār* (controllers of the head sluice), in a non-Brahmana village in the early Chola period. The development of technology and a consequent increase in agrarian productivity enabled the growth of powerful states like the Cholas and Chalukyas in south India in the succeeding period. Chola inscriptions in the Kaveri delta generally refer to lands in this region yielding two crops of rice (*irupū-viḷaiyum-nilam*) (Karashima 1984: 96).

Crops cultivated in this period also indicate the development of production. Rice cultivation was common in the fertile areas, like the deltas of the Godavari/Krishna and Kaveri Rivers. In southern Karnataka also, rice cultivation developed to some extent during the ninth and tenth centuries (Adiga 2006: 48–52) and sedentary agriculture developed in interior Tamil Nadu by the thirteenth century (Murton 2001). In the dry areas of the Deccan, however, cultivation of cereals like millets (*rāgi*, *jowar*, and others) was common and seems to have been mandatory (Nandi 2000: 97–102). A late tenth-century inscription (*EC*, 8, Sorab 477) in the Deccan records an order by a local ruler to enforce *rāgi* cultivation. In cereal cultivation, greater domestication of wild and undeveloped species was seen during this period. It is known from the *Manasōllāsa* of the Chalukyan king Somesvara that *kangu*, which had earlier been considered an inferior grain that only the poor ate, became material for royal dishes by the twelfth century.[19]

During this period, cultivation of areca nuts and betel leaves increased considerably, and proportionately to the development of temple rituals and a new social habit. Cultivation of sugarcane, coconuts, and various spices also developed. Two ninth-century Pandyan inscriptions (*SII*, xiv, 16-A; *EI*, ix, 10) provide recipes for making dishes to be offered to the deity. One of these dishes was made of curd and *kāyam* comprising five spices (pepper, turmeric, cumin, mustard, and coriander). Tamarind, sugar, betel leaves, areca nuts, coconuts, plantains, green gram, and rice are also mentioned in these inscriptions.

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[18] *Kuḻi* is a small land measure in the Tamil country. During the Chola period one *mā* (one-twentieth *vēli*) was equated variously to 100 to 256 *kuḻi*s (Sastri 1955: 621).

[19] Nandi (2000: 98–9). Achaya (1994) provides information on various crops, dishes, and eating habits in medieval south India, including those in the *Manasōllāsa*.

3.4 CAPITALS AND TEMPLES

P. SHANMUGAM

3.4.1 Capitals

The capital cities were centres of the general administration of south Indian kingdoms; the capital served as the residence of kings and their retinues. In the south, Kanchipuram and Madurai, both located on river banks, were the capitals of the Pallava and Pandya rulers respectively. Badami, newly built on a hillock in the sixth century, was the seat of the Chalukyas. Kanchipuram (Kanchipuram district, Tamil Nadu), on the north bank of the Vegavati (or Vehka), a tributary of the Palar River, was the capital of a pre-Pallavan chief called Tondaiman Ilantiraiyan and was known by various other names, Kachchi, Kachchippedu, Kanchi, and Kanchimanagar. At that time the city was surrounded by a high rampart and a deep moat and had a temple to the Reclining Vishnu, according to the long poem, *Perumbāṇāṟṟuppaḍai*. From about the beginning of the fourth century it became the capital of the Pallavas and continued as such until the ninth century. Then it became a secondary capital of the imperial Cholas.

The 'insurmountable' rampart of Kanchipuram is mentioned in the Gadval plates of Vikramaditya I, circa 670 (*EI*, 10, 22: p. 105), and the remains of the rampart are found scattered at a site called Pallavamedu on the western bank of the Vegavati. The city seems to have been continuously enlarged to accommodate the growing needs of a capital and mercantile centre (*nagaram*) by incorporating the adjacent areas.[20] It was also an important religious centre, having attracted and nourished sever religious beliefs, both Brahmanical and he erodox. Its Buddhist association is attested t both by Xuanzang (Hsüan-tsang; Hieun-tsan Yuan Chwang), who visited it in 634 CE, an by archaeological evidence. Several Buddhi monks and scholars lived there: Dinnaga (earl sixth century) founder of Buddhist logic an Dharmapala (seventh century) a great com mentator on Pali texts, (Minakshi 1979; Path manathan 2006: 8). Tirupparuththikkunram a suburb of Kanchipuram, was an importan centre of Jainism, whose pontiff received munificent grant from Simhavarman in abou 550 CE (Subramanian 1966). Kanchipuram was also a centre for Saivism and Vaishnavism *bhakti* saints of both the faiths visited this plac and sang praises of the deities enshrined in sev eral temples here. The city had a centre for San skrit education called *ghaṭika*. Mayurasarman the founder of the Kadamba dynasty, is said t have visited this city in about 350 CE to pursu Vedic studies in its *ghaṭika* (*EI*, viii: pp. 24–36)

Kanchipuram attained the special sta tus of *nagaram*, a mercantile centre, in th post-Sangam period and continued to be a important centre of trade during the Pallav rule. Textile production and metal work wer popular crafts. Smiths and weavers had separate quarters, and at another quarter called Videlvidugu-kudirai-cheri a local market was established in 864 CE (Shanmugam 2010: 52). The city is said to have had trade contacts with

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[20] The construction of the Kailasanatha temple suggests a deliberate attempt by Rajasimha (700–28) to expand the city's western limits. Further attempts to enlarge the area of the city were made by Nandivarman II (731–96). Attiyur, the eastern part of the city, now known as Chinna Kanchipuram, was not a part of the Pallava city. We have evidence to show that it was integrated during late Chola times (Shanmugam 2010: xxx).

China, probably from the second century BCE. Ban Gu (Pan Kou), a Chinese writer of the first century CE, refers to trade ties with a kingdom called Huang Zhi (Huang Chih), identified with Kanchipuram, though the identification is contested by some historians (Ray 1990/91). Xuanzang's statement that Kanchipuram served as a port is not generally accepted as the city is situated well in the interior. Even under the Cholas it continued to be an important mercantile centre in the northern Tamil country.

The city of Madurai (Madurai district, Tamil Nadu), whose origin is shrouded in mythology, was not only a political centre, but also an important cultural and religious one. It had, according to some literary traditions, a Tamil Academy (*sangam*) from the early centuries CE (see section 2.2). Some Sangam works, such as the *Maduraikkāñchi* and *Neḍunalvāḍai*, glorify several parts of the city and its well-guarded palace and defences. After the establishment of the Pandyan kingdom in the sixth century CE, Madurai probably grew in size. As it has been under continuous occupation, new structures have often entailed demolition of older ones. Therefore, no structures belonging to the early centuries have survived. This is also the case with the famous Minakshi-Sundaresvara temple where continuous building activity through the centuries has obscured or destroyed any earlier structures.

Traditional accounts that relate to the 'sports' of the god Siva refer to heavy floods in the Vaigai River and the construction of protective banks by the Pandya king to save the city.[21] Madurai's close association with Vaishnavism can be seen in the myth of Alagar (Vishnu) visiting the city from his abode on the hill Alagarmalai, 20 kilometres north of Madurai, to perform the marriage of his sister Minakshi with Sundaresvara during the annual festival in the first month of the Tamil calendar.

Kings, merchants, and other laymen modified several rock shelters all around Madurai such as those at Alagarmalai, Arittapatti, Anaimalai, and Tirupparankunram, and had beds carved from stone for Jain monks. The names of the monks and patrons are given in short Tamil inscriptions written in Tamil-Brahmi characters datable to circa first–second centuries BCE. An inscription refers to a gold merchant from Madirai (old form of Madurai) (Mahadevan 2003: 369). The Jain centres here are the earliest ones so far known in the history of south Indian Jainism.

According to an inscription (*EI*, xxvii, p. 4), the hill fortress at Badami (Vatapi), in Bijapur district, Karnataka, was planned and constructed by Pulakesin I in 543 CE. It was strategically located on a semi-circular hillock overlooking a village and a small tank. One side of the hillock was dedicated to Hindu and Jain cave temples, and the other dotted with fortified structures and with temples. Its location in the hilly region testifies to the technological skill of the builders. The fortress, situated on top of the hillock and considered impregnable, was ransacked in 643 CE when the Pallava king Narasimhavarman I invaded the city and occupied it for a brief period. Badami was in close proximity to two other important cultural and commercial centres within 20 kilometres of each other; Pattadakkal with a remarkable assemblage of temples (see Figure 3.7), was a centre for royal rituals, and Aihole (Ayyavole) an important commercial centre, was considered the headquarters

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[21] N. M. Venkatasami Nattar (ed.), *Tiruvilaiyadal Puranam* (Chennai, 1964). This is a collection of *purāṇa* or old stories relating the sacred sports of Siva at Madurai. Though this work is assigned to about the sixteenth century, some of the stories have come from earlier times. The story called 'Maṉ chumanda paṭalam' narrates the flood episode.

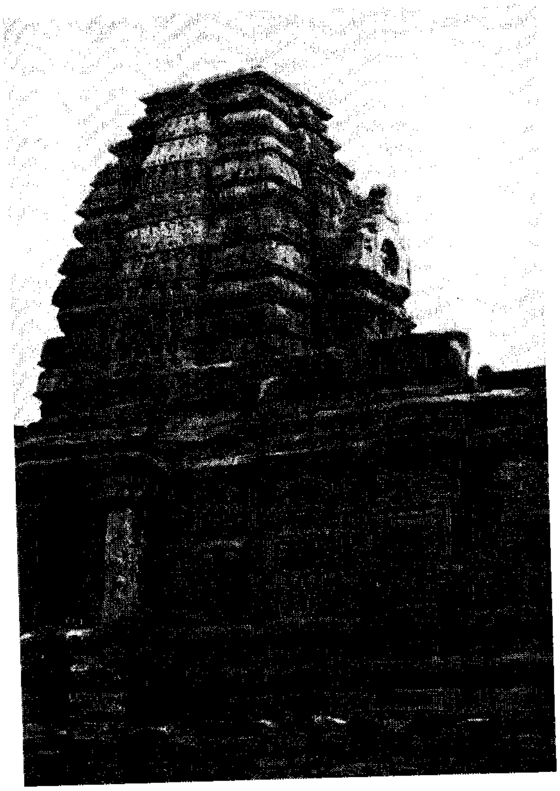

Figure 3.7 Northern-Type *Sikhara* of Papanatha Temple at Pattadakal
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

of the famous medieval Ayyavole mercantile guild.[22]

3.4.2 Temples

The temple as a central institution of worship had been well established by this period, though early structures have not been identified. The Karthikeya temple at Nagarjunakonda, constructed during the time of the Ikshvaku rulers, is the earliest archaeologically attested structural temple known so far. The Saiva and Vaishnava saints of the seventh to ninth centuries refer to a large number of temples (all over Tamil Nadu) that they visited and sang about in their hymns, (Prentiss 1999: 52; Champakalakshmi 2011). It is likely that many of these temples were in existence by the seventh century and were most probably either brick or mud structures. These earlier structures were converted into stone temples during the ninth century and later, and still continue to be important centres of pilgrimage for devotees of both sects.

In the Tamil country, the cult of Muruga (later identified with Subrahmanya) is very old and the associated shrines were situated on hillocks known as *paḍaiviḍus* (encampments). There are six such centres: Tirupparankunram and Alagarmalai near Madurai, Tiruchchendur in Tuttukkudi district in the south, Palani in Dindukkal district, Tiruveragam near Kumbakonam in Thanjavur district, and Tiruttani in the northern Tamil Nadu. Tiruveragam is alternatively identified with Tiruvedagam in Madurai district. The structural temples in some of these places go back to the eighth and ninth centuries.[23] At Tirupparankunram, the rock-cut shrine of Muruga seems to have been completed in the early eighth century as, by 783 CE, new sub-shrines were added to it for the deities Durga and Jyeshta. At Alagarmalai, the old structure no longer exists. The Murugan temple in Tiruchchendur is located near the shore as described in the *Tirumurgārruppaḍai*, and attracts a large number of pilgrims. The Palani temple is on the top of a small hillock and has inscriptions from the eleventh century, and the one at Tiruttani, which received grants from the Pallava king, Aparajita (c. 875–900), has a late Pallava structure.

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[22] For the relation of Aihole with *ainurruvar*, a merchant guild, see section 4.4.

[23] Tirupparankunram is located close to th Pandya capital, Madurai, where the rock-cut shrin of Muruga belongs to the time of the early Pandy rule (about the eighth century). At Alagarmalai, 2 kilometres north of Madurai, the old structure n longer exists. Tiruchchendur (or Tiruchchiralaivay) an important pilgrimage centre. This also belongs the early Pandya times. The temple at Palani, abo 60 kilometres northwest of Madurai, is situated o top of a small hillock. This shrine is famous for t devotees of Muruga who visit it carrying a *kāvaḍi* portable shrine) on their shoulders. Svamimalai n Kumbakonam is supposed to be Tiruverakam. This however, not so definite. The temple at Tiruttani Tiruvallur district has a late Pallava structure of ab 850 CE.

Unfortunately, structural temples of brick, mortar, and timber that existed earlier have not survived. They were either destroyed intentionally to build new structures or ruined by the ravages of time. In this period, a new medium, namely stone, was introduced in south India. Stone had been used in the western Deccan much earlier. However, the rock-cut structures—mostly dedicated to the Buddhist religion—there were created using a somewhat softer kind of rock. The Pallava and Pandya artisans, on the other hand, had to work with hard granite, whereas the Chalukyas worked with the softer sandstone (see Figure 3.8).

Most of the Pallava rock-cut monuments are in the northern part of Tamil Nadu, that is, in the Kanchipuram, Cuddalore, and Villupuram districts, where there are abundant rocky outcrops. Mahendravarman I is credited with the introduction of rock-cut temples in the Pallava territory on the basis of his inscription

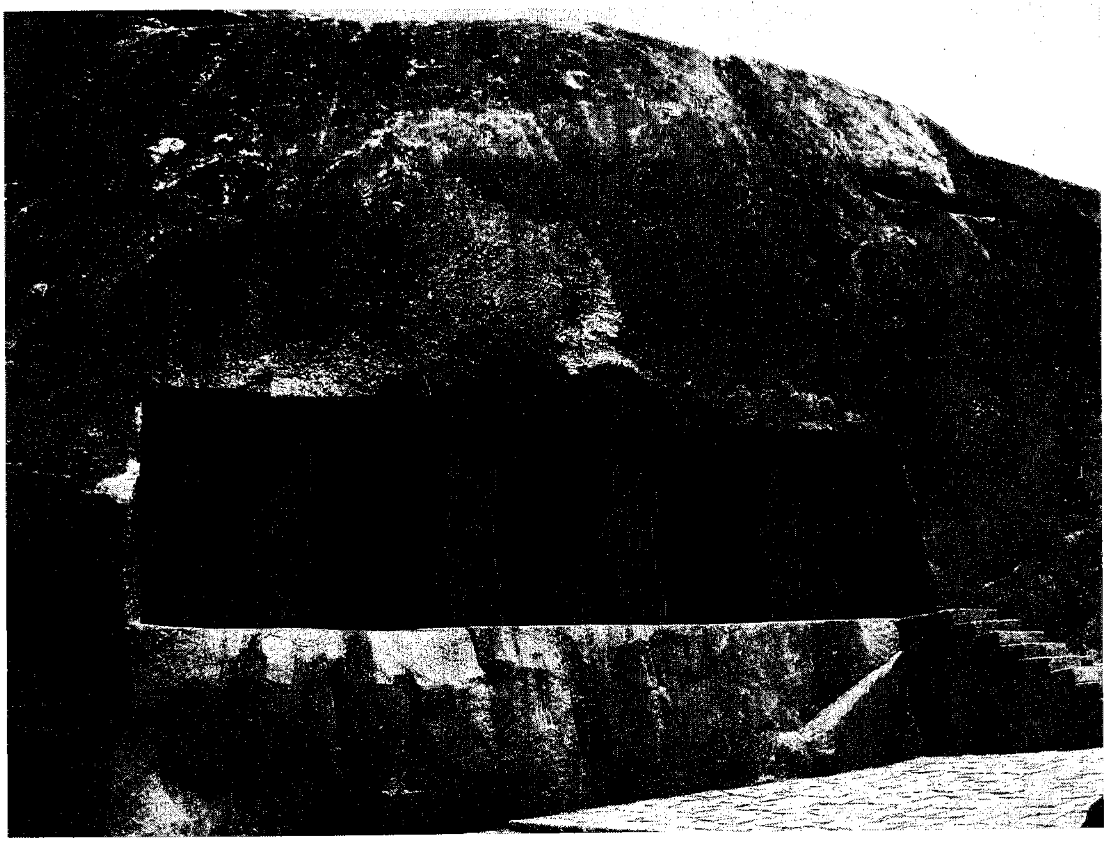

Figure 3.8 Rock-Cut Cave at Mandagapattu
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

from Mandagappattu (Srinivasan 1985: 34–5), in which he claims that his shrine to Brahma, Isvara, and Vishnu was made without using traditional materials like brick, timber, metal, and mortar (see Figure 3.9). His rock temples are usually of the *maṇḍapa* type with a pillared hall or *maṇḍapa* in front and a small shrine at the rear or sides. The pillars, carrying a heavy bracket, are massive. Later excavations revealed pillars carved with a splendid squatting lion at the base and, still later, a rearing lion motif. There are nearly twenty of the rock-cut shrines, some with foundation inscriptions.

The monolithic *vimānas* are peculiar to Mamallapuram. They are moderate in size and, carved in the round, are considered copies in granite of timber architecture. The five Rathas there are popularly known as the Panchapandava Rathas and also as the Seven Pagodas. Though named after the Pandavas, no iconographic connection has been established with them. The niches of the Arjuna Ratha contain exquisitely carved sculptures of Siva, Vishnu, *mithuna*, and *dvārapāla*. The most exquisite of the five is the Dharmaraja Ratha with a three-storeyed *vimāna* and a square base (Figure 3.10). The Bhima Ratha is rectangular in plan and has beautiful sculptures of Harihara, Brahma, Vishnu, Skanda, Ardhanarisvara, and Siva as Gangadhara.

The excellence of the Pallava artists can be seen in the massive sculptural friezes made by them at Mamallapuram. The most important is the magnificent carving popularly known as the Descent of the Ganga (Bhagirata's penance or Arjuna's penance), in which two boulders with an intervening gorge are utilized skilfully to depict a whole world of celestial gods, demi-gods, human beings, and animals. The portrayal of Puranic figures interspersed with popular local stories reveals the skill of the artists in happily blending various aspects of human and animal life. Equally important is the sculptural panel in the Krishna *maṇḍapa*, where village life with cows and cowherds is depicted with beauty and skill.

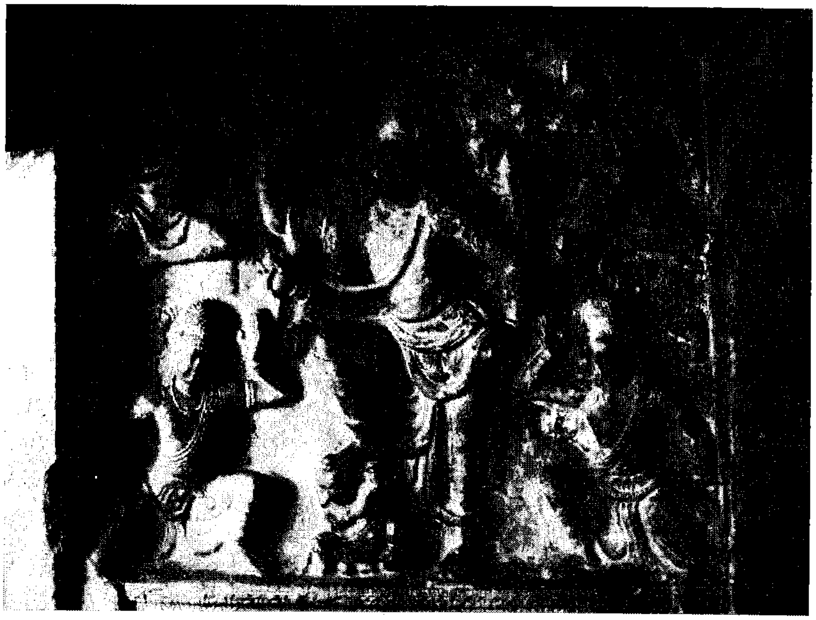

Figure 3.9 Panel Sculpture of Tiruchirappalli Hill Temple (c. Sixth Century)
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry.

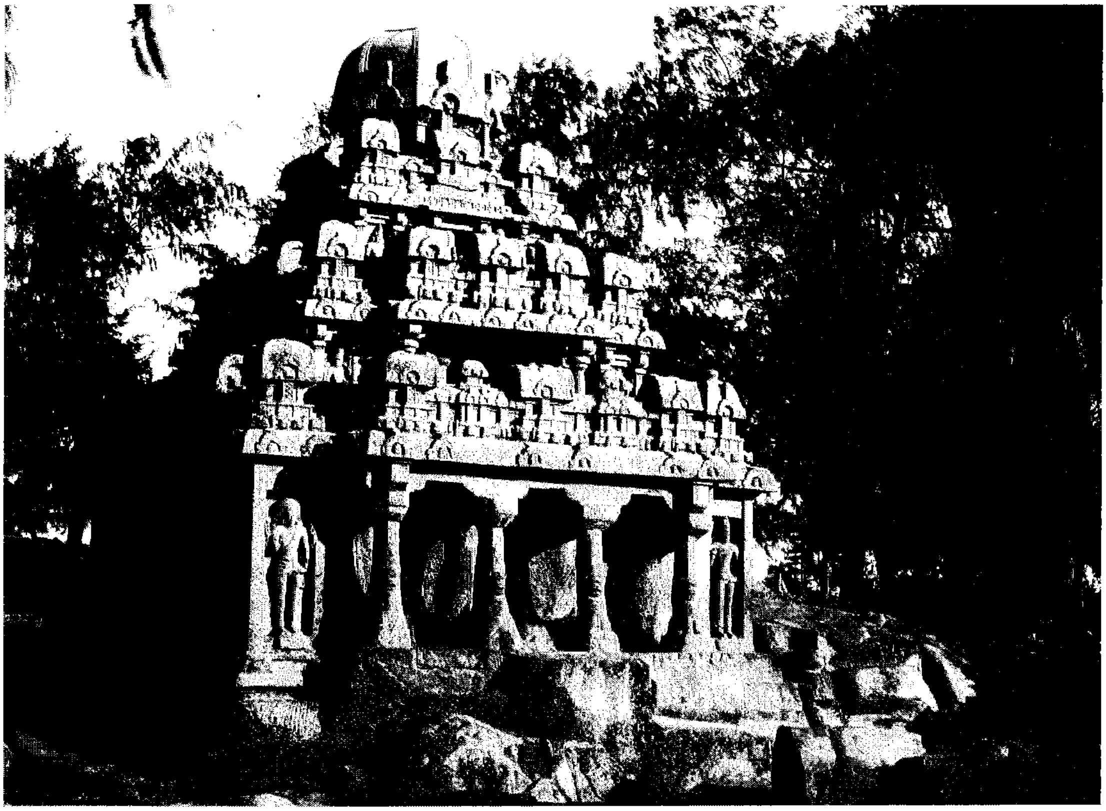

Figure 3.10 Dharmaraja *Ratha* at Mamallapuram
Source: Courtesy of Takeo Kamiya.

Rock-cut architecture was later completely abandoned and structural temples became a dominant feature of the Pallava idiom. Naturally, Pallava artists would have found structural temples more advantageous than rock-cut temples, as the former could be built even in plains without hillocks. The earliest extant structural temple, however, is the shore temple at Mamallapuram built by Rajasimha. The Talagirisvara temple at Panamalai and the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchipuram are also the creations of Rajasimha. The Kailasanatha temple follows a peculiar plan in its execution and also in its selection of stone. It has a shrine surmounted by a pyramid-like *vimāna* with seven subsidiary shrines. The inner side of the high-walled enclosure is provided with small shrines in which traces of paintings are also found. This is a unique feature of the temple and was later adopted in the Virupaksha temple at Pattadakkal by the Chalukyas. The Vaikuntaperumal temple at Kanchipuram, built by Nandivarman II and dedicated to Vishnu, is considered the finest example of Pallava architecture. The three small sanctums are square and located one above the other enshrining the standing, sitting, and reclining forms of Vishnu, with a four-storeyed *vimāna*. It has a projected portico and is enclosed within a pillared circumambulatory; the walls on the inner sides have carved panels depicting events in the history of the Pallavas.

In the Pandya country, though rock-cut shrines were built, they exhibit features slightly different from the Pallava ones. The early shrines were scooped out of the rock without a *maṇḍapa* in front. Such excavations are numerous in the Pandya country but very rare in the Pallava territory. In the later creations, one or more cells were cut into the rear or side walls of the pillared *maṇḍapa*. The massive pillars have an octagonal section in the middle with square sections at the base and top and carry heavy corbels. The earliest example of the Pandya rock-cut cave is found at Pillaiyarpatti with a small cell with an image of Vinayaga. The Malaiyadikkurichi cave (Arikesari, c. 700) is a *maṇḍapa* type with a single shrine cell at the rear. One of the famous cave temples was the Subrahmanya temple at Tirupparankunram commissioned by a Pandya minister in 773 CE. It has a cave shrine to Jyeshta and a *maṇḍapa*-type cave with shrines on either side of the *maṇḍapa* bearing images of Subrahmanya, Ganesha, Durga, Vishnu, and Somaskanda. The cave temple at Sittannavasal (c. 850) is a typical *maṇḍapa*-type structure with a front *maṇḍapa* and a shrine cut into the rear wall. The Satyagirisvara temple at Tirumayyam has a *maṇḍapa* and a shrine cell at the side of the *maṇḍapa*. Though they largely follow the Pallava idiom, the pillars of the Pandya cave temples exhibit some variety. In the Vishnu cave temple at Malaiyadippatti, the pillar bases are shaped like squatting lions. Images of Subrahmanya, Ganesa, the Saptamatrikas, and Jyeshta have been sculpted. Siva is represented in the form of the *linga* as well. The two lateral shrines in the *maṇḍapa* of the lower cave at Tiruchirappalli have been dedicated to Siva and Vishnu respectively. In the niches of the rear walls are the images of Brahma, Ganesa, Subrahmanya, Surya, and Durga. The Vettuvankoyil shrine at Kalugumalai (800 CE) was a monolith of the Pandya country comparable to the monolithic Rathas of Mamallapuram. Here, the granite rock was cut and carved into a monolithic shrine with a two-storeyed *vimāna*. Though incomplete, the finished upper parts of the *vimāna* illustrate the excellent workmanship of the Pandya artists. The temple contains some outstanding sculptures of Dakshinamurthi, Vishnu, Brahma, and Siva.

The Chalukyas also executed *maṇḍapa*-type creations in stone. They worked on the soft sandstone available in the locality and created large structures with ease. Their creations are mostly found in their capital at Badami and in the neighbouring towns of Pattadakkal and Aihole. At Badami are found four temples of the *maṇḍapa* type, of which two are dedicated to Vishnu, and one each to Siva and to the Jaina tirthankaras. The earliest and largest cave temple (Cave 3) was built by Mangalesa in 578 CE and dedicated to Vishnu (Figure 3.11). The other caves also share similar architectural features in general with a shrine cut into the back wall and a pillared hall in the front. The pillars are tall and massive often with a square section carrying corbels supporting a beam. On each plinth in the Hindu caves are carved goblins (*gaṇa*s) in various amusing postures. These caves contain fine sculpture of Narasimha, Harihara, Trivikrama, Nataraja, Ganesa, and Karthikeya. Two *maṇḍapa*-type caves are preserved at Aihole (Bijapur district, Karnataka). The Ravalagudi cave, dedicated to Siva, consists of a *maṇḍapa* with a large shrine having a rock-cut *linga* at the rear and two more shrines at the sides dedicated to the Saptamatrikas and attendant deities. The sculptures include Mahisasuramardhini, Ardhanarisvara, and Harihara. The other, a Jain cave, has a rectangular front *maṇḍapa* with slender pillars carrying the usual components.

Chalukya structural temples are confined to their capital at Badami and in neighbouring Mahakuta, Aihole, and Pattadakkal. The earliest structural temple was the Megutti temple at

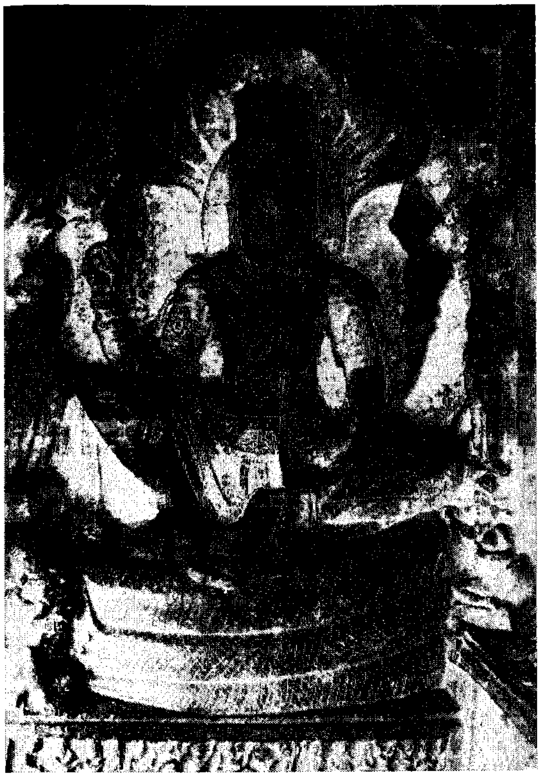

Figure 3.11 Vishnu in Badami Cave *Maṇḍapa*
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

Aihole, built in 634 CE. Dedicated to the Jaina pantheon, it has a closed *maṇḍapa* on a raised and moulded plinth with four central pillars. Malegitti Sivalaya at Badami has a shrine with a *maṇḍapa* and frontal porch crowned with a single-storeyed *vimāna* (Figure 3.12). In this series fall the Jyotirlinga, Ladkhan (Figure 3.13), and Kontigudi temples at Aihole. The Ladkhan temple has a large *maṇḍapa* standing on a moulded *adhisthāna* with four central pillars.

The Mahakutesvara temple at Mahakuta represents a development of the earlier Dravidian monuments of Badami with an east-facing shrine, surrounded by a passageway on three sides. Images of Ardhanarisvara and Siva are found in the temple. The Sangamesvara temple at Mahakuta was built in the *nagara* style (northern style) with a simplified *śikhara*. The most important in the series is the Virupaksha temple at Pattadakkal, built by the queen of Vikramaditya II in commemoration of his victory over Kanchipuram and considered in some respects to be an imitation of the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchipuram. The temple follows

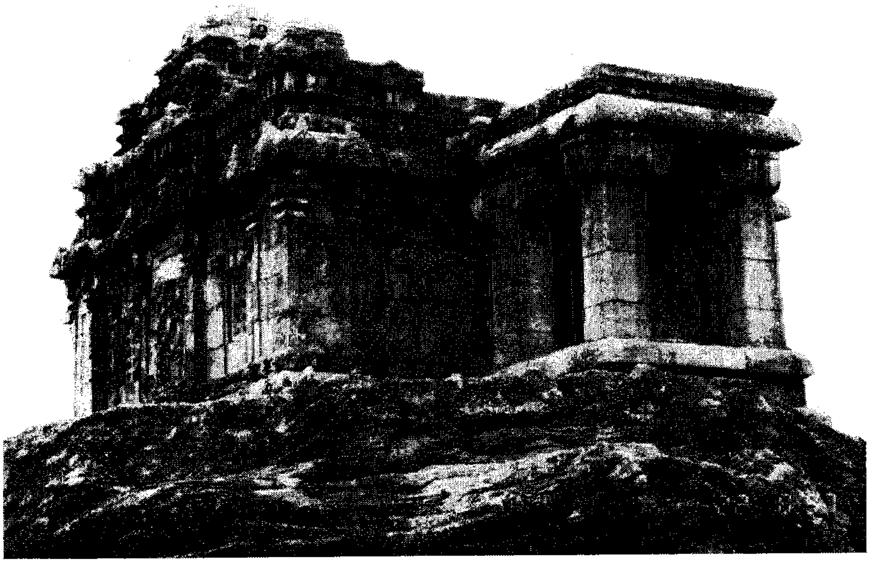

Figure 3.12 Malegitti Sivalaya Temple at Badami
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

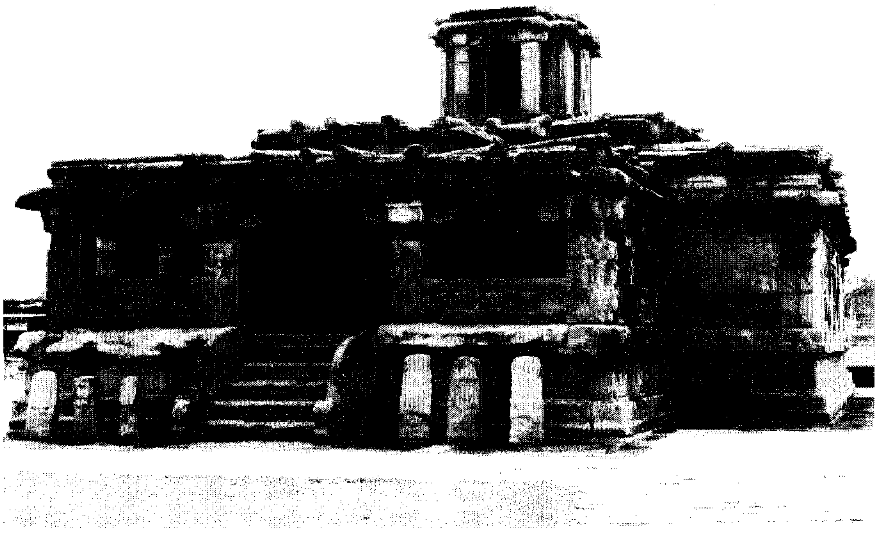

Figure 3.13 Ladkhan Temple at Aihole
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

a simple plan of a central shrine preceded by a *maṇḍapa* with a four-storeyed *vimāna*. The sculptures include Nataraja, Bhairava, and Trivikrama. The Durga temple at Aihole is seen as an attempt to adapt the Buddhist *chaitya* to a Brahmanical temple; with an apsidal shrine and a northern type of square *śikhara,* it stands on a high plinth.

3.5 THE *BHAKTI* MOVEMENT

NOBORU KARASHIMA

3.5.1 Synthesis of Southern and Northern Traditions

From the sixth to the ninth centuries there occurred in the Tamil country a religious movement called the *bhakti* movement, in which Saiva devotees called *nāyanārs* or *nāyanmārs* (63 were canonized) and Vaishnava devotees called *āḻvārs* (12 were canonized) played an important role. The *nāyanārs* and *āḻvārs* visited many temples and sacred places singing the hymns they composed in praise of the deities (Siva and Vishnu respectively) of those places or by performing, as the legends had it, miracles owing to their pure and total devotion.

The Saiva poets include Appar, Sambandar, and Sundarar, who were called *mūvar* (the trio; see Figure 3.14), and Manikkavasagar (see Figure 3.15) and the hymns of these Saiva saints and devotees, were compiled into an anthology of 11 books by Nambi Andar Nambi, probably at the end of the tenth century or during the beginning of the eleventh (Zvelebil 1995: 473). The first seven books, later commonly known as *Dēvāram*,[24] contain the hymns of Sambandar

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[24] The name *Dēvāram* seems to have been given to this corpus of the *mūvar*'s hymns later, probably in the sixteenth or seventeenth century.

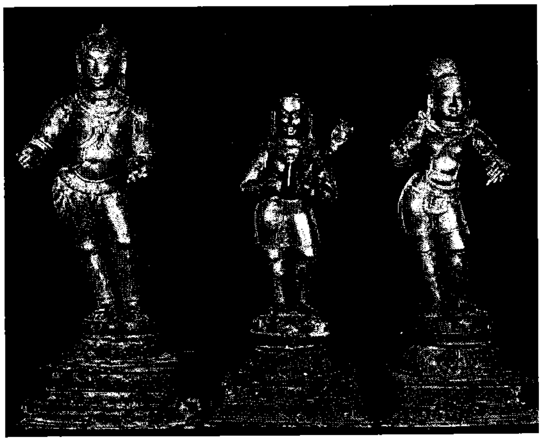

Figure 3.14 *Mūvar* Bronze Images (from Left, Sambandar, Appar, and Sundarar)
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry and École française d'Extrême-Orient.

(books I–III), Appar (books IV–VI), and Sundarar (book VII), the eighth book those of the Manikkavasagar, the ninth book *tiruvisaippā* (musical compositions) hymns by nine composers, the tenth the philosophical poems by Tirumular, and the eleventh various hymns of 12 poets, including Nambi himself, belonging to the period between the sixth and tenth/eleventh centuries.

To this corpus, Sekkilar, minister of the Chola king Anapaya (identified by most scholars with Kulottunga II), added in the twelfth century the *Periyapurāṇam* (*Tiruttoṇḍarpurāṇam*), an elaborate hagiology of the 63 *nāyanārs*, taking the whole collection to 12 books that later became known as the *Tirumuṟai*.[25] Seven out of the 63 *nāyanārs* were composers whose hymns are recorded in the *Tirumuṟai*, but the others are saints who were known only for their piety. The historicity of some of the latter is doubtful, but Sundarar mentions the names of these 63 *nāyanārs*, including himself, in the early ninth century.[26]

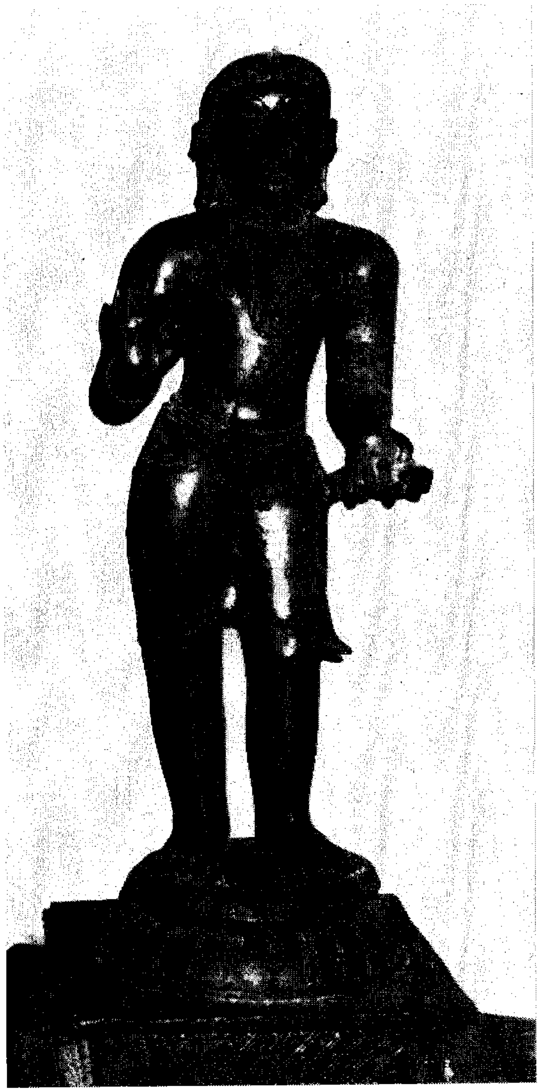

Figure 3.15 Bronze Image of Manikkavasagar (Madurai Museum)
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

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[25] Though the word *Tirumuṟai* appears in the twelfth century, we are not sure whether it meant all 12 books or the first seven books, or some other combination in the early stage.

[26] There is a possibility that stories of some saints were fictions created to match in number the 63 Jain saints and heroes described in the Jain *Mahāpurāṇa* (Zvelebil 1995: 491).

Vaishnava hymns, including those composed by Periyalvar, his adopted daughter, Andal, Tirumangaiyalvar (Figure 3.16), and Nammalvar, were compiled in the *Nālāyira Divviyaprabandham* (Four Thousand Divine Works) by Nadamuni, probably at the end of the ninth century or at the beginning of the tenth. Nadamuni was a priest at the Ranganatha temple in Srirangam and the work comprises four thousand hymns composed by 14 poets. Of these 14, however, only 12, including the three mentioned above, were treated as *āḻvārs* who were canonized. Unlike the 63 *nāyanārs*, all 12 *āḻvārs* were poets, though some composed only a few hymns.

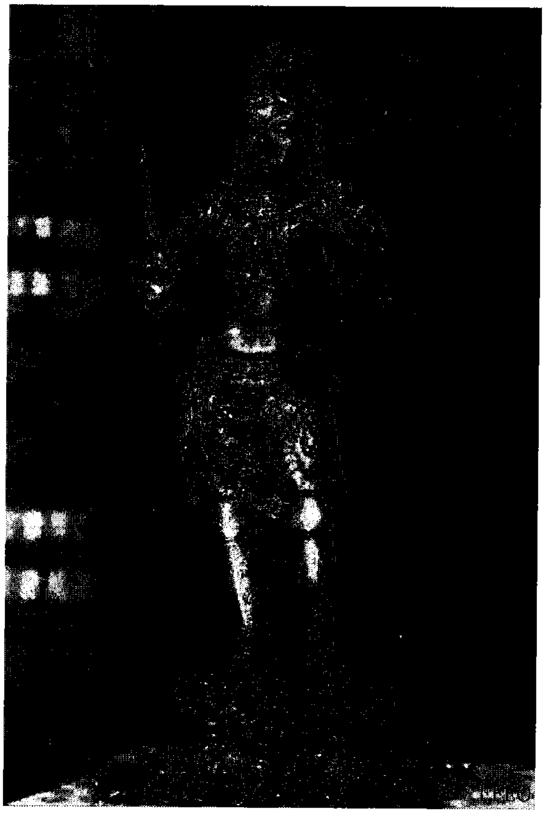

Figure 3.16 Bronze Image of Tirumangaiyalvar
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry and École française d'Extrême-Orient.

The concept of *bhakti* (devotion) can be seen in earlier north Indian religious works, including the *Bhagavadgīta* in the *Mahābhārata*, in which Krishna tells Arjuna that *bhakti*, together with *karma* (activity), is one of the ways (*mārgas/yōgas*) to attain the final salvation. Though the cult of devotion was practised in the Gupta state, it was in south India during the Pallava period from the sixth century onwards that, for the first time, it took the form of a religious movement, namely the *bhakti* movement. It coincided with the introduction of Hinduism that developed from Brahmanism in north India in association with the newly produced *purāṇas* and *āgamas* incorporating many local beliefs and religious traditions. Construction of many temples to the new deities, Siva and Vishnu, also began in this period as already seen.

This process of the spread of Hinduism is often called the Aryanization of south India but, at the same time, the spread of the *bhakti* cult in this period as a religious movement in the Tamil country should also be explained in its relation to ancient Tamil cultural tradition. In the Sangam literature, great importance was given to *aham*, which dealt with idealized and typified love between man and woman. This also transformed into the *bhakti* cult in south India, which expressed 'the ecstasies of the eternal love between the soul and the Lord' (Zvelebil 1973: 198). Had there been no *aham* tradition, *bhakti* brought from the north would have remained just a doctrine or dogma and would not have stirred the soul of the common people to give rise to a movement. Besides, *bhakti* poets, who travelled from one sacred place to another praising the Lord in those places, remind us of Sangam poets who travelled from one palace to another praising in their *puṟam* songs the valour and generosity of the chief of the locality, though the purposes of their travel were different.

In the Deccan, both Jainism and Buddhism were dominant during the Satavahana period and in the Tamil country they became influential in the post-Sangam period (fourth and fifth centuries). Newly arrived Hinduism had to compete against these Sramanic religions, which had more rational and egalitarian doctrines, but the foregoing description of the synthesis of northern and southern traditions in the form of the *bhakti* cult enabled Hinduism to dominate over Buddhism and Jainism. According to Champakalakshmi (2011: 90), a new synthesis had already appeared in the *Paripāḍal* and the *Tirumurugārṟupaḍai* (fifth to sixth century) revealing 'the idea of an absolute or universal godhead—Māl/Māyōn/Vishnu and Murugan/Subrahmanya—and their abode, that is, the temple'. Thus, the flowering of the *bhakti* movement and the advance of Hinduism in the south was made possible by the synthesis of northern and southern religious traditions.

In relation to the foregoing statement, there is another point to be considered in our further studies, namely the sectarian difference conceived by the worshippers of some deity in this period and the difference we make between the so-called *great* and *little* (Aryan and local) traditions. Leslie Orr discusses this point by studying goddess worship in the Tamil country in the period from the eighth to the thirteenth centuries (Orr 2005). According to her, the examination of the myths, iconography, inscriptions, and placement in ritual settings of female deities makes us open to the idea that the goddesses Parvati, Ambika, and Bhagavati, were regarded by their worshippers 'simply' as goddesses and not Saiva, Jain, or Vaishnava goddesses. She also states that the study calls into question not only the salience of sectarian classification in medieval Tamil Nadu but also the categorization of gods, and especially goddesses, as either 'local'/'village' or 'universal'/'pan-Indian' deities.

3.5.2 *Nāyanārs* and *Āḻvārs*

We shall now briefly discuss the lives of the famous saints recorded in the *Periyapurāṇam* and in the Vaishnava hagiographies called the *Guruparampara*, together with some of their poems.

Tirunavukkarasu (Appar), one of the trio, was born in a Vellala family in Tiruvarur and converted to Jainism in his youth. He returned to Saivism at his sister's pleading and is said to have converted the Pallava king, Mahendravarman I (580–630), from Jainism to Saivism. Wandering from temple to temple, he composed lyrical poems in praise of Siva and is believed to have composed 49,000 stanzas of which 33,000 are extant and constitute books IV to VI of the *Tirumuṟai*. In one of his poems, he eulogizes Siva in Arur (Tiruvarur):[27]

First, she heard His name
Then she heard about His colour and form
and His Arur.
Though dissuaded, she became mad for Him
and left her mother and father that very day,
abandoning the customs of the world.
Losing herself
forgetting her own name
this girl placed her head at the Lord's feet.

Tirunavukkarasu lived long enough to meet another of the *mūvars*, Sambandar, who called him Appar (father).

Tirugnanasambandar (Sambandar) was born in a Brahmana family in Sikali in the first half of the seventh century. He is said to have won the Pandyan king Nedumaran[28] over from Jainism to Saivism by miraculously curing his illness. An implacable foe of Jainism and Buddhism, he is believed to have been responsible for the execution of 8,000 Jains by impalement. Considered a real prodigy, producing 4,181 fine stanzas praising Siva, his hymns are more powerful when set to music. He is said to have entered 'eternal bliss' on the occasion of his wedding at the age of sixteen.

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[27] Translation by Prentiss. Prentiss (1999: 53) cites this poem as a good example of *bhakti* hymns following the Sangam *aham* tradition.

[28] He was identified by Nilakanta Sastri with Maravarman Arikesari Parankusan (Sastri 1929: 53–4 [1972 reprint: p. 48]).

Sundaramurti (Sundarar), the last of the trio, was born in a Sivabrahmana family in Tirunavalur on the south bank of the Then Pennai River probably at the end of the eighth century. Though he is said to have attained Siva's bliss at the tender age of eighteen together with his friend, the Chera king Cheraman Perumal, himself a *nāyanār*, he appears to have lived to a ripe old age. He had two epithets, one Tambiran-tolan ('the Lord's Comrade') and the other Vantondar ('Insolent Devotee') as he demanded from God many good things in life. He is said to have involved God even in his complicated matrimonial arrangement.

Manikkavasagar (meaning 'He whose utterances are rubies') was a Sivabrahmana from Tiruvadavur on the Vaigai River (Figure 3.15). He first served the Pandyan king Arimarttanar[29] as a minister, but later renounced his career to become a Saiva poet-saint. He lived later than Sundarar[30] and his hymns represent the Saivite mysticism that developed subsequently and reveal an inclination towards Saiva Siddhantism. His magnum opus, the *Tiruvāsagam*, represents 'the peak of the *bhakti* poetry' (Zvelebil 1975: 144) of which an example is the poem 'Longing for Union':[31]

I had no virtue, penance, knowledge, self-control,
A doll to turn
At others' will I danced, whirled, fell. But me
He filled in every limb
With love's mad longing, and that I might climb
there whence is no return,
He shewed His beauty, made me His. Ah me,
when shall I go to Him?

The *Periyapurāṇam* comprises many stories about non-poet *nāyanārs* and the miraculous episodes in their lives. The story of Tirunalaipovar (Nandanar) is one of them. Nandanar, a Paraiya working with leather, used to make drums and was an ardent devotee of Siva. He had a strong desire to visit Chidambaram. However, he was too busy to go and vowed each day that he would go the next, which gave him the name Tirunalaipovar (He who will go tomorrow). Ultimately, his dream of visiting Chidambaram was realized and his heart trembled with joy. But, being an untouchable, he was not allowed inside and he wept outside the temple wall. Siva appeared and instructed the temple priests to let him. Nandanar walked unharmed through a purifying fire and entered the sanctum where he disappeared under the raised foot of the dancing Siva idol.

Another story is that of Kannappan (Tinnan), a hunter in the Kalahasti area. On becoming a Saiva devotee, each day he cooked the game he hunted and offered it to the Siva *linga* on Kalahasti hill. One day, he saw one of the eyes on the *linga* bleeding. Unable to stop it, he plucked out his own eye with an arrowhead and applied it to the *linga*'s eye. Then he saw the other eye on the *linga* bleeding. When he was about to pluck, out his other eye, Siva appeared before Tinnan addressing him as Kannappa (He of the eyes), blessed him, and restored his sight. Kannappan is also included among the 63 *nāyanārs*.

As for the *āḻvārs*, Periyāḻvār is considered among the most famous of the twelve. He was a

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[29] Nilakanta Sastri suggests the identification of this Pandyan king with Varaguna II (862–85) (Sastri 1955: 425).

[30] This may explain the reason for his non-inclusion among the *nāyanārs*.

[31] Translation by F. Kingsbury and G. E. Phillips (Kingsbury and Phillips 1921: 127).

Brahmana of Srivilliputtur and lived in the ninth century, a contemporary of the Pandyan king Maravarman Srivallabha. His hymns are very popular and are recited in many Vaishnava rituals. The themes are mostly Krishna's childhood, and the hymns are therefore thought to have influenced Vallabha's worship of Balakrishna. One of his poems here illustrates that love exists between God and the devotee alone:[32]

A diadem dances on his brow as he strolls;
gold trinkets on his ankle tinkle in the dust.
Lovely young moon, if the eyes in your face are real,
come, watch the frolicking of my son Gōvinda.

Andal, another *āḻvār*, is found abandoned as a baby in Periyalvar's garden and he brings her up as his own daughter. Krishna is the hero in her hymns as well and they express her love for him. She imagines herself to be the bride of Ranganatha in Srirangam and refuses to marry any mortal. She is said to have been accepted by God and miraculously absorbed into the stone idol of her beloved in the sanctum sanctorum of the Srirangam temple. A song about her wedding with the Lord, which she experiences in her dream and narrates to her friend, is quite popular and is sung to this day at all Vaishnava marriages of the Tamil people. It runs:[33]

Today and in endless future births
our Lord Narayana, my Nambi
will be my constant companion—
with his holy lotus hands
upon the *ammi* stone he placed my foot—
This dream I dreamt my friend.

Nammalvar, a Vellala from Kurugur in Tirunelveli district, is considered by many to be the greatest *āḻvār*, and Vaishnava *bhakti* reached its culmination with his deeply philosophical hymns. He probably lived in the period from the end of the ninth century to the beginning of the tenth. According to a hagiology, for sixteen years he sat in silent meditation under a tamarind tree, which finally earned him a revelation of Vishnu. He is said to have conveyed the essence of the four Vedas in his four works, which include the *Tiruvāymoḻi*.

In these hagiological stories, we notice a merging of the northern Brahmanical ideas with the southern Tamil tradition of this period. Though the canonization of untouchables is against the Brahmanical tradition, that Nandanar was allowed to enter the temple only through the flame exemplifies the strength of the Brahmanical idea of pollution. The story of Kannappan, the hunter, concerns blood, offering game (flesh) to the Siva *linga*, the *linga* bleeding, and Kannappan plucking out his own eye, unmistakably reflecting the Tamil tradition of violent sacrifice (Shulman 1980: 10) noticeable in the Sangam poems (see Figure 3.17). In addition, it is significant that this story is found in the *Periyapurāṇam* composed in the twelfth century.[34] The story involving blood and sacrifice is found in the origin myth of some temples in Tamil Nadu, including the Sucindram temple (Shulman 1980: 93), and testifies to the enduring strength of Tamil religious tradition, superimposed though it is by north Indian religious ideology.

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[32] Translation by Lynn Ate (2011: 78).

[33] Translation by Vidya Dehejia (1988: 123).

[34] In the *Periyapurāṇam*, there are some more stories that describe violent sacrifice. In one of them, the saint Sirutondar is said to have killed and cooked his five-year-old son and offered him as a meal at the request of a Bhairava devotee.

Figure 3.17 Stone Sculpture Depicting the Kannappan Story
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry and École française d'Extrême-Orient.

3.5.3 The *Bhakti* Movement and the State

In order to clarify what implications the movement had for society and polity, we must now consider the people or the social groups who joined and promoted the *bhakti* movement. In the past, some scholars tried to define the movement as 'social protest' or 'social reform' organized to resist the oppressive rule of the new Hindu kingdoms based on the caste system. Recent scholarly interpretations run contrary to this view. It is true that the canonized *nāyanārs* and *āḻvārs* included persons considered untouchables, as the story of Nandanar shows, but the community/class-wise count reveals roughly the following distribution:

20 (26.7%)	Brahmana origin, for example Sambandar, Sundarar, Manikkavasagar, and Periyalvar
15 (20%)	Kshatriya origin (kings and chiefs) such as Cheraman Perumal, Kulasekhara Alvar, and Tirumangaialvar
14 (18.7%)	Vellala origin like Appar and Nammalvar
7 (9.3%)	Merchant origin
3 (4%)	Artisans and others of similar caste status (potters, fishermen, and shepherds)
6 (8%)	Low-caste (Paraiya and others) like Nandarar and Tiruppanalvar
10 (13.3%)	Caste unspecified as in the case of Andal

Sources: Rajamanikkam (2002) and Madhavadasan (1962).

The above chart indicates that 65 per cent of the *nāyanār* and *āḻvār* saints came from the upper social stratum, as Vellalas were a dominant agrarian caste in the Tamil country with matrimonial relations with the royal family. Even if we exclude Kshatriyas and Vellalas, Brahmanas alone comprise 27 per cent of the saints. This casts a doubt on the theory that the *bhakti* movement was possibly a means of social protest or social reform. On the contrary, M. G. S. Narayanan and Kesavan Veluthat regard *bhakti* ideology as 'the cementing force bringing together kings, Brahmin priests and the common people in a harmonious manner' (Narayanan and Veluthat 1978: 45) to strengthen the rule of the newly established Hindu kingdoms based on the caste system.

As for the relation between this religious movement and political powers, we perceive that the latter were deeply involved in the movement and made good use of it for their rule. As already seen, the Pallava king, Mahendravarman I (580–630) is said to have been brought into Saivite fold by Appar, and during the later Pallava period introduced the recitation of the hymns of the *mūvar* (*tiruppatiyam*) in temples enjoying royal patronage. Similarly, Sambandar was responsible for the Pandyan king, Nedumaran's, conversion from Jainism to Saivism. Both the Pallava and Pandyan kings, who followed Hinduism, utilized this vibrant new religious cult for their rule by incorporating the *bhakti* hymns into the liturgy offered in newly constructed temples.[35]

The Cholas, who established power in the Kaveri delta in the middle of the ninth century, had an advantage. If we do a check on the temples and sacred sites that figure in the songs of the *mūvar* (such places are called *pāḍalperṟatalam*), 190 sites out of the total 274 were in the Chola country (Chola-nadu), 32 in the Pallava country (Tondai-nadu), and 14 in the Pandyan country (Pandi-nadu) (Peterson 1991: 13) (see Map 3.2). The Cholas utilized this situation. Aditya I, who replaced the Pallavas at the beginning of the tenth century, is credited with having built many Siva temples in the *pāḍalperṟatalam* along the Kaveri. Sembiyan Mahadevi, queen of Gandaraditya (949–57), also built many Siva temples in the same way, incorporating the *bhakti* cult into the temple liturgy. As Narayanan and Veluthat say, *bhakti* seems to have functioned to bring together kings, Brahmanas, and the common people in harmony from the time of the early Pallava kings in the sixth century to the early Chola kings in the tenth.[36] Burton Stein, who laid stress on the 'Brahman–peasant alliance' of the period makes a slightly different argument. According to him (Stein 1980: 87), *bhakti* was an ideological factor that made the politico-economic alliance of Brahmanas and Vellalas possible and sustainable.[37]

However, if we pay attention to the actual relations between kings, Brahmanas, Vellalas, and other communities, we realize that things are not so simple. Among Brahmanas we have to differentiate between those who lived in *brahmadēyas* granted by the king for adhering to Vedic tradition and those in temples serving as priests. Some priests and other temple functionaries, such as *tiruppatiyam* reciters, seem to have been Vellalas (Prentiss 1999: 101). During the Pallava/Pandya and early Chola period (sixth to tenth centuries), these two groups, namely *brahmadēya* Brahmanas, who managed temple affairs, on the one hand, and priests and other functionaries in the temple (temple-priest Brahmanas and Vellalas), on the other, were not antagonistic—they cooperated in glorifying the new Hindu deities, and Rajaraja I at the end of the tenth century seems to have tried to integrate them under his strong leadership by establishing a new *linga* cult in Rajarajesvara temple.

In and after the latter half of the Chola rule, there developed a rift between these two groups that widened, and led to the revival of orthodox Vedantic religion by the Brahmanas and the establishment of south Indian Saiva Siddhanta

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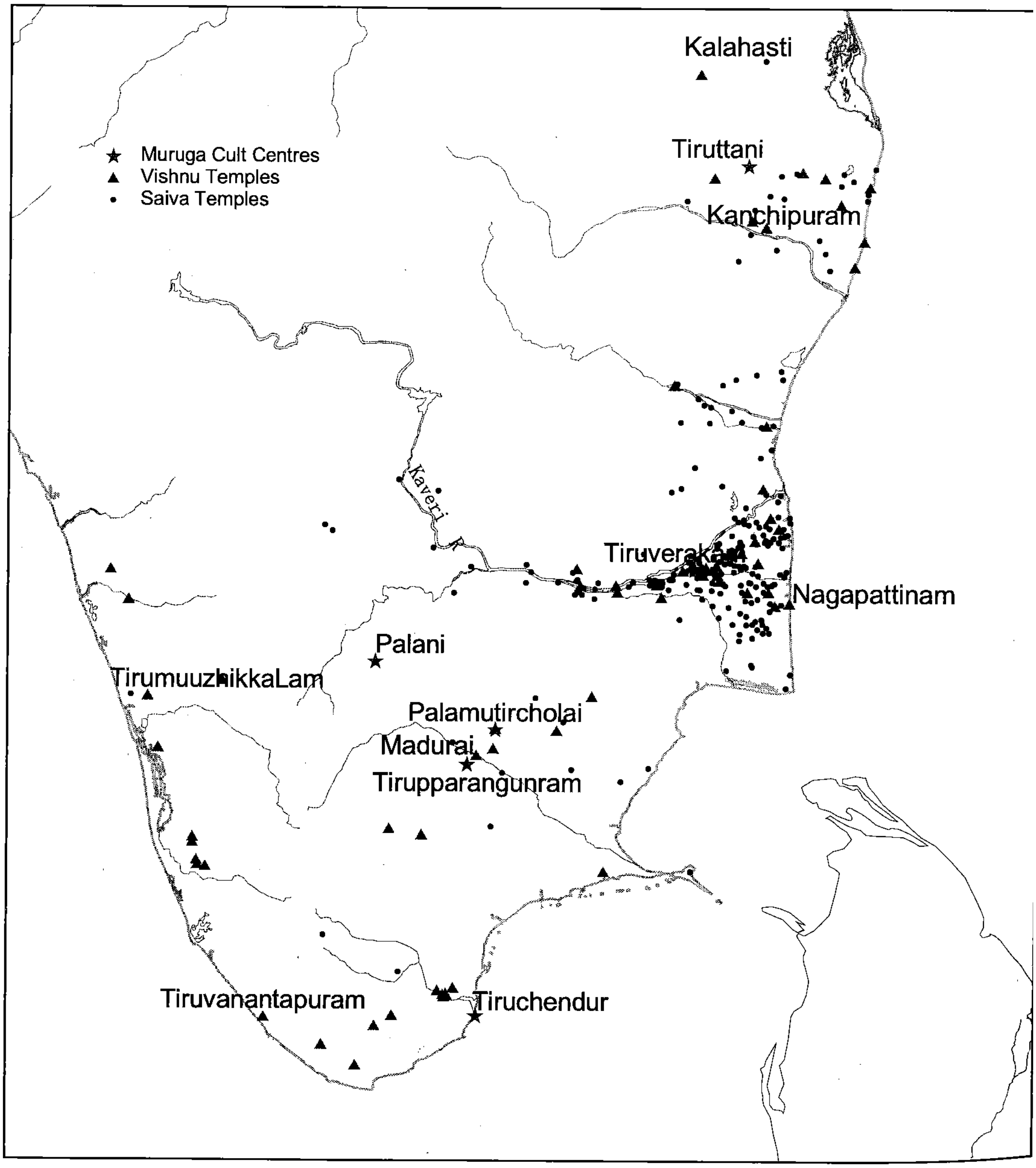
[35] Prentiss (1999: 84 and 105) discusses the relation of this new policy to the change from sacrifice to *dāna* in the state ritual of the Pallavas which was pointed out by Dirks, and Champakalakshmi (2011: 100) suggests a relationship with the increase in land grants to Brahmanas under the Pallava and Pandyan rule.

[36] Narayanan and Veluthat state, 'This (*bhakti*) provided an illusion of equality' among the people in a caste-based society. A similar statement is made by Champakalashmi (2011: 73 and 619), though she is of the view that it was the Chola kings who employed *bhakti* as an ideology underpinning the state (2011: 624).

[37] Stein extends the period of alliance up to the fourteenth century, which is not correct as the alliance seems to have lost its rationale in the latter half of the Chola rule, but if we limit the time-frame to the late Pallava and early Chola period, Stein's position may be acceptable with some reservations.


★ Muruga Cult Centres
▲ Vishnu Temples
● Saiva Temples
Kalahasti
Tiruttani
Kanchipuram
Kaveri R
Tiruverakam
Nagapattinam
Palani
TirumuuzhikkaLam
Palamutircholai
Madurai
Tirupparangunram
Tiruvanantapuram
Tiruchendur

Map 3.2 *Bhakti* Centres in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, 600–900 CE
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

by the Vellalas. One of the reasons for this later development must have been the decline in and after the tenth century of Buddhism and Jainism, against which both groups had fought together. Another reason was that with the increase in the power of the people of the lower *jātis* in and after the eleventh century, the Tamil religious tradition regained its popularity and importance in society.[38] This will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

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[38] Champakalakshmi articulates a similar idea describing it as 'Ideology in Crisis' (2011: 628). To understand this 'crisis', however, we need to further analyse the triangular relation of the kings, Brahmanas, and Vellalas, together with their relationships with other communities.

3.6 WOMEN IN PREMODERN SOUTH INDIAN SOCIETY

R. MAHALAKSHMI

Patriarchy has generally been understood as an ideology that legitimizes structural inequality between men and women, with women's labour and reproductive capabilities placed under the control of men (Geetha 2008). South Indian society in the premodern period reveals interesting insights into the nature of patriarchal society and the condition of women through an interrogation of the rich literary, inscriptional, and iconographic evidence.

The early medieval period can be understood as marking an important trajectory in gender relations and the institutionalization of patriarchal structures in south India. While the Sangam sources of early historic Tamilakam reveal a tribal society in varying stages of development and the limitations of the emerging state system, a study of the patriarchal norms of the time indicates the marginalizing of women as lovers, mothers, and wives in the poetry, which was more concerned with male pursuits of war and heroism (Mahalakshmi 2009: 29–42). Despite these limitations, there are indications of matrifocal and matripedestal traditions in the sources, indicating different cultural practices within the Tamil macroregion (Thiruchandran 1997: 38–40).[39] The post-Sangam literature (c. fourth–sixth centuries CE), marked by the didactic works and the epics, points to influences from outside the region in the form of Jainism and Buddhism, conspicuously articulated in works such as the *Tirukkuṟaḷ*. While women continued to largely be portrayed as complementary figures to the heroic male, who was at the centre of the discourse, characters from the *Silappadikāram* like Kannagi and Kavunti Adigal, a Jaina nun, and *Manimekalai* in the epic of the same name gave precedence to women who visibly upheld the moral order envisaged by the heterodox traditions of Buddhism and Jainism.[40] However, the new ideas presented by the Sramanic traditions were eclipsed in the early medieval period with the growth of the Brahmanical religion in the region.

Bhakti literature (c. sixth–ninth centuries CE) gives us an insight into the cultural transformation of the landscape under the influence of Brahmanical religion, ideas, and practices. The introduction of specific attitudes towards women as inconspicuous and marginal subjects in an era marked by major political economic changes has led some feminist scholars to invoke the idea of 'Brahmanical patriarchy' where women's subordination in social life was seen as linked to the evolution of caste-based society, and where class, caste, and gender were seen as regulated and legitimized by religion (Chakravarti 2003: 5). However, the corpus of *bhakti* hymns of the *nāyaṉārs* and *āḻvārs* presents a far more complex picture, with women conspicuous as devotees, men speaking in the feminine voice to the objects of their devotion—Siva and Vishnu, and women and men reinforcing certain patriarchal values that affirmed family, kin relationships, and social structures, even as they themselves stood outside these.

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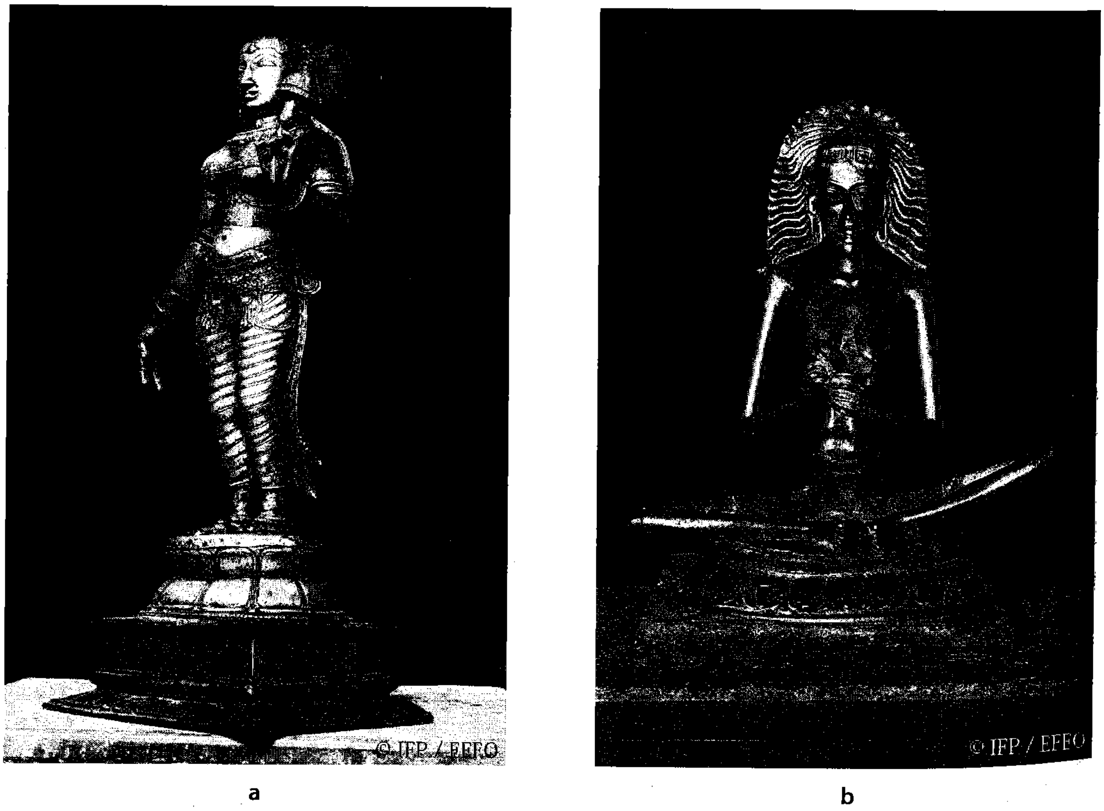
[39] Matrifocal societies are those that are centred on the mother as the pivotal figure in the social organization, while matripedestal refers to the idolization and worship of the mother.

[40] Scholars have pointed out that in this period patriarchal attitudes towards widows in particular reveal an anxiety to control not merely women's sexuality but also their physical bodies, as seen in injunctions regarding widows' tonsuring of their heads, and in being considered inauspicious. This may be linked to the Buddhist and Jaina attitudes towards women's bodies as a deterrent to male and female enlightenment.

Andal was the only woman saint among th twelve *āḻvārs*, an orphan who was brought u in the home of the temple priest of Srivilliputtur, another Vaishnava saint called Periyāḻvā (Figure 3.18a). She composed two major poems which are replete with erotic imagery and revea her desire to be the bride of Vishnu (Dehej 1988). The life story of Andal, narrated in th later hagiographies of the twelfth and thirteent centuries, is marked by her devotion and love fo Vishnu, and the ultimate foreclosure to her desiring the forbidden—union with God—when, a the age of sixteen, she is said to have merged into the idol of Ranganatha in the temple at Sri Rangam. Karaikkal Ammaiyar, the only woman saint composer in the Saiva tradition, wrote of



a b

Figure 3.18 Bronze Statues of (a) Andal Alvar and (b) Karaikkal Ammaiyar
Source: Courtesy of Institut Français de Pondichéry and École française d'Extrême-Orient.

Siva's dance in the forests and cremation grounds at Tiruvalangadu. She constantly emphasized her position as a *bhakta*, and never consciously played on her femininity in her compositions. On the contrary, she spoke of her terrifying form, which resembled that of frightening and bloodthirsty spirits and ghouls (Figure 3.18b). Again, twelfth-century hagiography provides a narrative within which her celebration of her ugly form can be understood—she is believed to have given up her physical form, symbolized by her shrunken breasts, once she was abandoned by her husband. These two examples of women who were in apparent public view but outside the normative patriarchal structure reiterate certain patriarchal ideas about women's legitimate roles in society, and indicate that those who transgress these norms cannot continue to live within the existing social parameters. That is why Andal's overt declarations of desire led to her mortal life coming to an end, and Karaikkal Ammaiyar had to cease to be a woman and shrink her form to be recognized as a ghoul. In Karnataka, we hear of a woman saint, Akkamadevi, who cast away her clothes and all the illusory bonds, including marriage, that tie the *bhakta*, when she realized that the object of her devotion was all-seeing and all-pervasive (Shivaprakash 2010: xxxiii–xxxv).

One of the ways in which we can gauge the nature of gender relations in society is by analyzing the differential access of men and women to economic resources. Inscriptions reveal that a large number of women had the economic resources to build temples and make donations for various services in temples (Orr 2000). They are mostly mentioned as daughters, wives, and mothers of important men in the state structure or the locality. Royal women were very visible, particularly in the early Chola period (c. ninth–tenth centuries CE), with the locus of their activity in the core Tamil regions of Thanjavur and Tiruchirappalli, and often the same temples receiving many endowments.[41] Other categories of women who had some control over land and other resources were women belonging to Brahmana families, palace women, and temple women. The last category represented those who performed dances for various ritual purposes in the temple, and who were considered to be *devadāsīs* or god's slaves (see

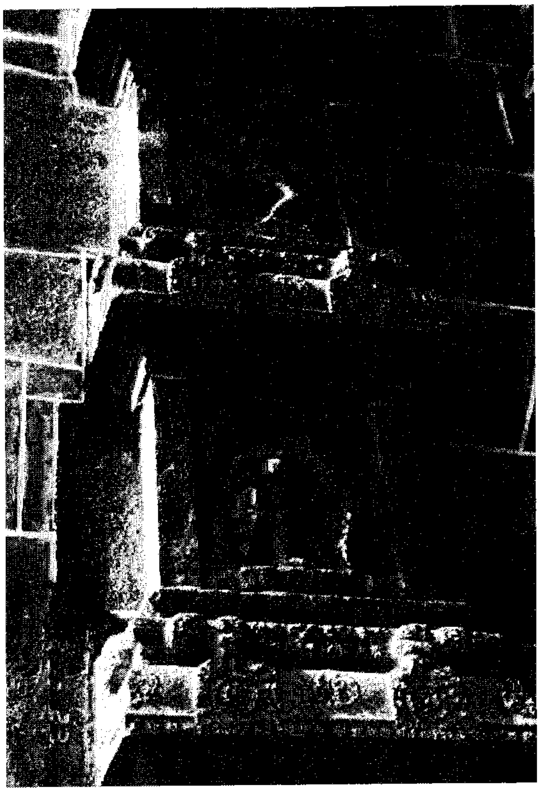


Figure 3.19 Dancing Woman Panels at Chidambaram Temple
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

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[41] There are some conspicuous exceptions as far as the women of royal and chiefly households are concerned. In Karnataka, during the time of the Hoysalas, several queens had the freedom to administer some localities independently (Derrett 1957: 187). Then there is the unique case of Rudramadevi, daughter and successor of Ganapati to the Kakatiya throne (Sastry 1978).

Figure 3.19). Interestingly, the conspicuousness of temple women increased vis-à-vis other categories of women in the inscriptions because of their ability to make donations, since they were the only section of women who were paid and had an independent economic standing. However, on the whole, the number of women who were donors was minuscule when compared to men (Orr 2000: 68–9). We do not have explicit references to women as cultivators, or as part of the trading world or the menial groups, although there is no doubt that they must have contributed in various ways to the production process. A famous question that was posed with regard to the invisibility of certain sections of women in the Vedic period, 'What happened to the Vedic Dasi?' (Chakravarti 2006: 3–38), has a relevance in our region as well, and the absences indicate the biases in our sources for early medieval south India.

Myths give us an insight into the world view of the society from which they emanate, and are particularly useful in helping us understand how gender identities are structured in a cultural context, although they are articulated in relation to deities in the domain of the sacred. The myths relating to Siva and various goddesses in the Tamil context bring into the narrative certain stereotypes with regard to men and women that are magnified in the divine realm, reflecting the attitudes and expectations of early medieval society. The hymns of the Saiva *nāyaṉār* bring to the fore such attitudes.

The early medieval period saw the employment of a number of literary motifs by the *bhakti* saints associating a regional goddess, Korravai, known in the Sangam literature with the male deity Siva as her spouse or adversary, by associating her with Parvati or Kali respectively. In either case, continuity with the Sangam traditions was apparent, and the latter often appeared to overpower the Puranic influences. The Tamil *Purāṇas*, composed fro the twelfth century onwards, are significant i this regard because they appear to carry th weight of both the Tamil and Sanskritic traditions, particularly in relation to the goddess It is significant indeed that a resolution, whe possible, was arrived at in the myths throug the medium of marriage. Where this was no possible, the 'local' goddess was displaced b the 'transcendental' god, literally implying th severing of her association with her original cultic spot, as in the case of Tiruvalangadu. Wher the goddess was seen as an adversary, invariabl the resolution of the myth was in the contex of a dance performance, either individually b Siva or by the goddess, and in some cases as competition between them. The blurred vision of the independent goddess at the margins di not merely reflect personal, individualized perceptions of the saints, but were a resonance from the earlier substratum of religious and cultural beliefs. These narratives very significantly premise social order on marriage, and mark as chaotic those spaces that are occupied by women in particular outside the normative social institutions (Mahalakshmi 2011: chapter 6). The actual victory of Siva is not merely because of his expertise in dance, but is also a phallic triumph where Siva performed the *ūrdhvatāṇḍava*, a dance where one leg is firmly planted to the ground, while the other is lifted straight upwards towards the sky. The goddess loses because she cannot emulate this step given her womanly nature. Chidambaram, the site of the dance of bliss or *ānandatāṇḍava* of Siva, is also the site where he defeats Kali with his phallic move and banishes her to the northern margins of the sacred site.

In myths, Siva is constantly exhorted to take up residence in particular sites, and we are also told that the Puranic goddess Uma-Parvati takes on a local form and name and in fact roots the deity here. At Kanchipuram, for instance, Parvati protects the sand *linga* she was worshipping from the cosmic flood (*pralaya*) by clutching it to her breasts. The *bhakti* saints talk of the imprint of her breasts on Siva's body, alluding to this myth. Such myths of localizing the male deity by his consort are embedded in the interesting kinship patterns of south Indian society where, unlike in northern India, a woman is not completely displaced from her natal home through marriage because of the system of cross-cousin marriages. A variant form of this 'Dravidian kinship' is the matrilineal tradition that is still in vogue among some communities such as the Nairs in Kerala, where lineage affiliation is drawn from the mother's side (Trautmann 1981: 168, 418–20).

The south Indian cultural landscape underwent a major transformation in the early medieval period affecting gender relationships as seen from various dimensions. However, myths and ritual practices in particular reveal that there were continuities with the older, indigenous social traditions. This can be seen in the fact that although local goddesses in the classical tradition were transformed into divine spouses, in local cultic worship the goddesses remained independent and fiery, subservient to none.

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CHAPTER 4

The Tenth to Twelfth Centuries

The Emergence of a Centralized State

4.1 THE BALANCE OF TWO POWERS

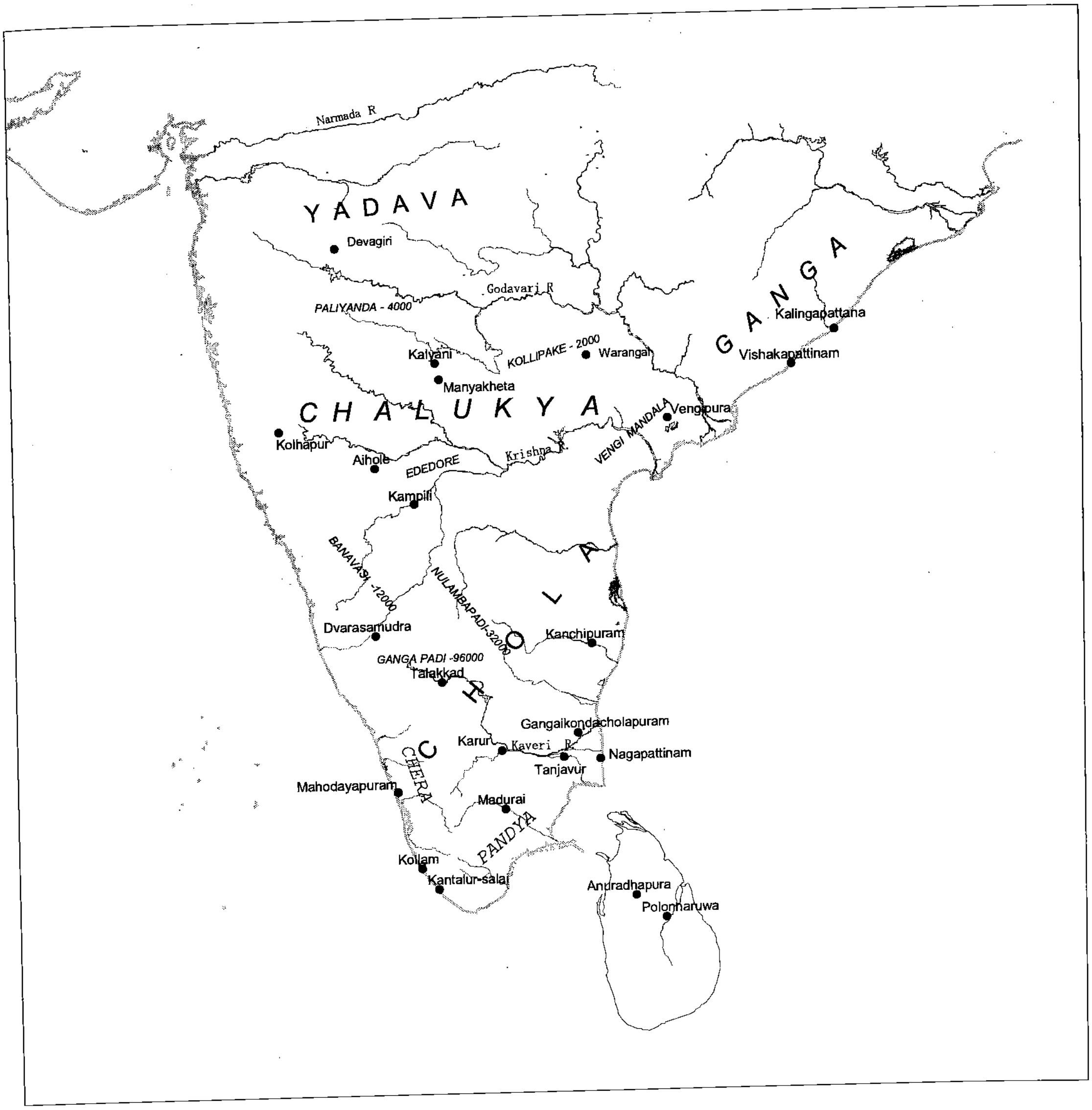
NOBORU KARASHIMA

The Cholas, who grew to be one of the two most powerful states in premodern south India—the other being the later Vijayanagar state—began their rule in the middle of the ninth century and disappeared by the latter half of the thirteenth century. Nilakanta Sastri described this period as 'the balance of two empires', as the Rashtrakutas and the Chalukyas of the Deccan confronted the Cholas successively for hegemony over south India. We follow here Sastri's nomenclature in describing a political history characterized by the confrontation of two powers. The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, however, can be seen more properly as a period of transition from one social formation to another, as a consequence of the social change that occurred during the tenth to twelfth centuries and, therefore, we shall treat that period in the next chapter.

The Cholas, who occupied the Kaveri delta, increased their strength during the ninth century when the two contemporary big powers of the Tamil country, the Pallavas in the north and the Pandyas in the south, and the Rashtrakutas of the Deccan, were fighting each other for hegemony. Though the origin of the Cholas is unknown, they claimed that they were descended from the Cholas who flourished in the same area during the Sangam period. The first king of this later Chola dynasty, Vijayalaya, seems to have been a feudatory of the Pallavas. He established an independent position by taking Thanjavur from the Muttaraiyas, another local power, in the course of the Pallava confrontation with the Pandyas and the Rashtrakutas involving also the Gangas in southern Karnataka and the Simhalas in Sri Lanka. At the end of the ninth century, the second Chola king, Aditya, killed the Pallava king, Aparajita, in battle and annexed Tondai-mandalam that formed the territory of the Pallavas.

This brought the Cholas into conflict with the Rashtrakutas, who were related through matrimony to the Pallavas, as the Rashtrakutas had extended their territory close to Tondai-mandalam, and also sought to occupy the Andhra country by defeating the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi. The Rashtrakuta kings often invaded the Chola country, and Krishna III, who was on the throne in the middle of the tenth century, defeated the Cholas in the battle of Takkolam in 949 towards the end of the reign of Parantaka I, 'Conqueror of Madurai', and occupied the northern half of the Chola country. After this defeat, the power of the Cholas declined for some decades. However, Taila II of the Chalukyas defeated the Rashtrakutas in 973, after which the Cholas gradually regained their strength (see Map 4.1).

The two Chola monarchs who expanded their kingdom to the greatest extent in the south were Rajaraja I (985–1014) and his son and successor, Rajendra I (1012–44). In the south, Rajaraja first fought against a federation of the Pandyan, Chera, and Sri Lankan rulers,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YADAVA
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Warangal
Manyakheta
CHALUKYA
Kolhapur
Aihole
EDEDORE
Krishna R
VENGI MANDALA
Vengipura
GANGA
Kalingapattana
Vishakapattinam
Kampili
BANAVASI -12000
NULAMBAPADI-32000
CHOLA
Kanchipuram
Dvarasamudra
GANGA PADI -96000
Talakkad
Gangaikondacholapuram
Karur
Kaveri R
Nagapattinam
Tanjavur
CHERA
Mahodayapuram
Madurai
PANDYA
Kollam
Kantalur-salai
Anuradhapura
Polonnaruwa

Map 4.1 South India in Tenth to Twelfth Centuries
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

and defeated the Cheras by destroying Kandalur and deprived the Pandyas of their capital, Madurai. He then invaded Sri Lanka and established the Chola rule in the northern part of the island by occupying Anuradhapura, and went on to subdue the minor powers, including the Gangas in southern Mysore, and take on the Chalukyas in the north.

The Chalukyas in the Deccan, with their capital in Manyakheta, resisted the invasion of Malwa from the north and increased their power during the reign of Taila II. In the southeast, they often clashed with the Cholas over the rule in Vengi. At the beginning of the eleventh century, the Cholas advanced their army towards the eastern and western Deccan and brought a vast area south of the Tungabhadra River under their rule, having taken Manyakheta.

Later, Rajaraja attacked the Maldive Islands too in order to control the East–West maritime trade in the Indian Ocean. To profit from the trade, he sent envoys to the Chinese court.[1] At Thanjavur, his capital, he built a magnificent Siva temple enshrining a *linga* named after him, and the inscriptions inscribed on the walls of this temple record his grant of the revenue of a large number of villages, including some in southern Karnataka and Sri Lanka. Rajendra I, who succeeded Rajaraja I in 1014, continued to occupy the northern part of Sri Lanka, the Pandyan country, and Kerala. He appointed viceroys to the former two regions, named Chola-Lankesvara and Chola-Pandya respectively. Polonnaruwa was the seat of Chola rule in Sri Lanka.

In the Deccan, Paramara Bhoja of Malwa attacked the territory of Jayasimha II and took Gujarat from him. After recovering it, Jayasimha tried to invade Vengi by taking advantage of the succession dispute there. Rajendra I stopped the invasion and after bringing Vengi under his control, advanced his army further north. Having subdued the Eastern Gangas in the north, his expeditionary force reached the banks of the Ganga. Commemorating this event, he took a new name, Gangaikondachola ('the Chola king who took the Ganga'), and returned to Gangaikondacholapuram, the new capital named after the recently chosen epithet (see Figure 4.1). Around 1025, he sent naval expeditions to the Strait of Malacca and sacked the Srivijayan towns in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra, including Kadaram. He also sent envoys to China and these expeditions and envoys were for the purpose of monopolizing the maritime trade by enfeebling the rival Srivijaya state.

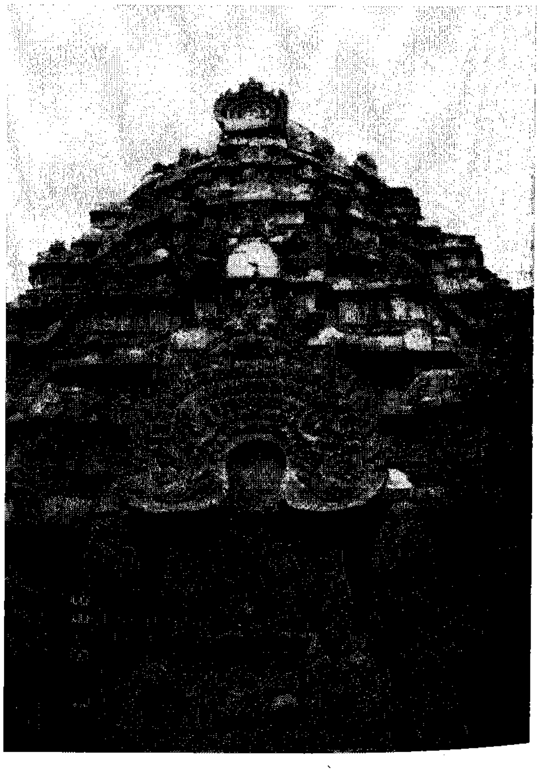

Figure 4.1 *Vimāna* of Gangaikondachola Temple
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

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[1] The presence of the envoys sent by Rajaraja I to the Chinese court is recorded in *Songshi*, the Annals of the Song Dynasty. The record is translated from Chinese in Karashima 2009: 266–76.

Rajendra's attack on Srivijaya came after his north Indian expedition and these two events saw the Chola state achieve its greatest territorial extent. In his later years, however, conflict with the Chalukyas flared up again. Somesvara I, who ascended the Chalukyan throne in 1042, shifted his capital from Manyakheta to Kalyani, attacked the Paramaras and Pratiharas in the north, and invaded Kalinga in the east. Though he maintained control over the affairs of Vengi, the conflict with the Cholas continued without any decisive victory. After his death in 1068, his elder son, Somesvara II, succeeded him, but his second son, Vikramaditya (VI) rebelled and the kingdom was divided into two, the northern part being ruled by Somesvara and the southern part by Vikramaditya.

For the next two years, relations between the Cholas and the Chalukyas were extremely strained over the Vengi question. Finally, in 1070, an Eastern Chalukyan prince of Vengi ascended the Chola throne as Kulottunga I. Two years earlier, the Cholas (under Virarajendra) had sent another naval expedition to the Malay Peninsula in response to a request for help from a Kadaram king, and duly reinstated the latter in the throne.[2] However, at the very beginning of Kulottunga's reign, Sri Lanka was lost, Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura being recaptured by Vijayabahu who rose to power in the Rohana area (in the southeastern part of the island). Chola rule in southern Tamil Nadu also became precarious because of the rebellion in the Pandyan country, but Kulottunga I sustained Chola power by paying more attention to domestic administration rather than expansion of Chola territory.

In the Deccan, in 1076 Vikramaditya ascended the Chalukyan throne by defeating Somesvara. His court was adorned by learned poets, including Bilhana who eulogized the king in his *Vikramānkadēvacarita*. During Vikramaditya's reign, however, his feudatories, such as the Hoysalas and Kakatiyas, consolidated themselves, subsequently threatening the central power.

In the later years of Kulottunga's rule, Chola power both in the south and the north became unstable. Vikramachola (1118–35), who succeeded Kulottunga, expanded the Chidambaram temple, the family temple of the Cholas. However, from the beginning of the twelfth century, state finances came under strain and many inscriptions of this period record tax arrears and consequent land sales. Under such circumstances, the local chiefs, who were mostly from ex-hill tribes composing the Chola army, increased their strength, and regions other than the central part of the country virtually came under their control.

In the latter half of the twelfth century, there arose a big conflict in the Pandyan country, caused by a succession dispute in the royal family, involving the powers of Sri Lanka (Parakramabahu), Kerala (Kulasekhara), and the Cholas (Rajadhiraja/Kulottunga III). Even after Jatavarman Kulasekhara ascended the Pandyan throne in 1190, fighting between the three powers continued. The reign of Kulottunga III (1178–1218), who maintained the Chola suzerainty in the south and built in Tribhuvanam in the heart of the Chola country a magnificent Siva temple with sculpture-covered walls was, however, to be the last flourish of the Chola hegemony in south India.

In the Deccan in the twelfth century, the Seunas (Yadavas) in the north, the Kakatiyas in the east, and the Hoysalas in the south threatened Chalukyan power. Even at the centre, the Kalachuris usurped the throne for a time in the latter half of the century. Finally, in 1190 the

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[2] An account contrary to this is found in *Songshi*, for which see Karashima 2009: 276–80.

Seunas from the north and the Hoysalas from the south advanced their armies and destroyed the Chalukyas. Somesvara IV was the last of the Chalukya kings.

4.2 THE CHOLA STATE: CENTRALIZED OR SEGMENTARY?

NOBORU KARASHIMA

The Chola state, according to Nilakanta Sastri, was characterized as 'the almost Byzantine royalty of Rajaraja and his successors with its numerous palaces, officials, and ceremonials, and its majestic display of the concentrated resources of an extensive empire' (Sastri 1955a: 447) differing from 'the simple, personal rule of the earlier time' (Sastri 1955b: 200). This statement was criticized later by Burton Stein who regarded the Chola state as 'segmentary' (Stein 1980: 256–7). According to Stein, the segmentary state was composed of many similar segments surrounding a core and was ruled by the king. Though each of the other segments also had its own ruler, sovereignty was restricted to the king ruling the core segment. And the king exercised his sovereignty only ritually in a major part of the state as he had no political authority over the surrounding segments. Stein tried to apply this theory to south Indian states from the Pallava to the Vijayanagar periods.

Borrowing the idea from Southall who studied an African society, Stein first published this theory towards the end of the 1970s (Stein 1977), and when he elaborated it in his *magnum opus* (Stein 1980), it drew support as well as criticism from many scholars.[3] One of the most important points criticized was Stein's categorical denial of the king's political authority over segments other than his own. Accordingly, Stein gradually changed his interpretation towards the end of his life in 1996, finally admitting that a king's political authority was combined with his ritual authority in the case of Hindu kingdoms, although he did not discard his theory of the 'segmentary state' still interpreting the Chola and Vijayanagar states as segmentary (Stein 1991). Here, we shall focus our discussion on this point, the king's political authority, by examining various state policies and the bureaucracy which implemented those policies.

Royal stone temples of the early Chola period before Rajaraja I can be classified into two types. The first includes temples of a sepulchral nature (*paḷḷippaḍai*) that were built over the remains of kings who died in war, and the second, those newly built or renovated using stone at the sacred sites of the Tamil religious tradition (Ogura 1999). Reminiscent of the ancient practice of commemorating a hero by marking in stone the spot where he fell, Parantaka I built the Kodandaramesvaram temple, the first sepulchral temple, at the spot where his father, Aditya I, died in battle . Though temples of this type continued to be built in the later period, the Siva temple constructed by Rajaraja I in Thanjavur was a new type.

As stated earlier, Rajaraja enshrined in this temple a *linga* named Rajarajesvara after himself. Rajaraja was alive when it was constructed, and, therefore, it was not sepulchral. Its scale far surpasses that of the earlier Chola temples and is magnificent. Hence it is obvious that Rajaraja wanted to project his own greatness, and the unchallenged prestige of the state, by building this temple. In that sense, it may be taken as a display of the ritual sovereignty of the king over the whole country, somewhat in accordance with Stein's theory. However, we also have clear evidence in this temple of the exercise of the king's political sovereignty.

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[3] Critics include M. G. S. Narayanan, R. Champakalakshmi, Kesavan Veluthat, Noboru Karashima, Y. Subbarayalu, and R. S. Sharma. Sharma's (1989/90) critique is considered definitive.

As already mentioned, there are in it many inscriptions recording magnificent gifts to the deity by the royal household and other people (see Figure 4.2). From some (*SII*, ii, 4, 5, and 92) of them we learn that Rajaraja granted to the temple state revenue accruing from as many as 40 villages in Chola-mandalam, the core area of the state, and 16 villages in the conquered areas, including southern Karnataka and Sri Lanka. Detailed information about each of the 40 villages is given. For the conquered villages too, the amounts of grain or money to be paid, as well as the measurements of taxable land are given, though in less detail than for the villages in Chola-mandalam. A king without political sovereignty, or without command over a state bureaucracy, could not have made such grants of villages over as wide an area as this or provided detailed information on each village, including those in the newly conquered areas.

Actually, the Chola state had a well-developed bureaucracy for revenue collection. The revenue department called *puravuvari* comprised various offices, functions and features such as *puravuvari-tiṇaikkaḷa-kaṇkāṇi* or *puravuvari-tiṇaikkaḷa-nāyagam* (accountant supervisor of the revenue department), *varippottagam*

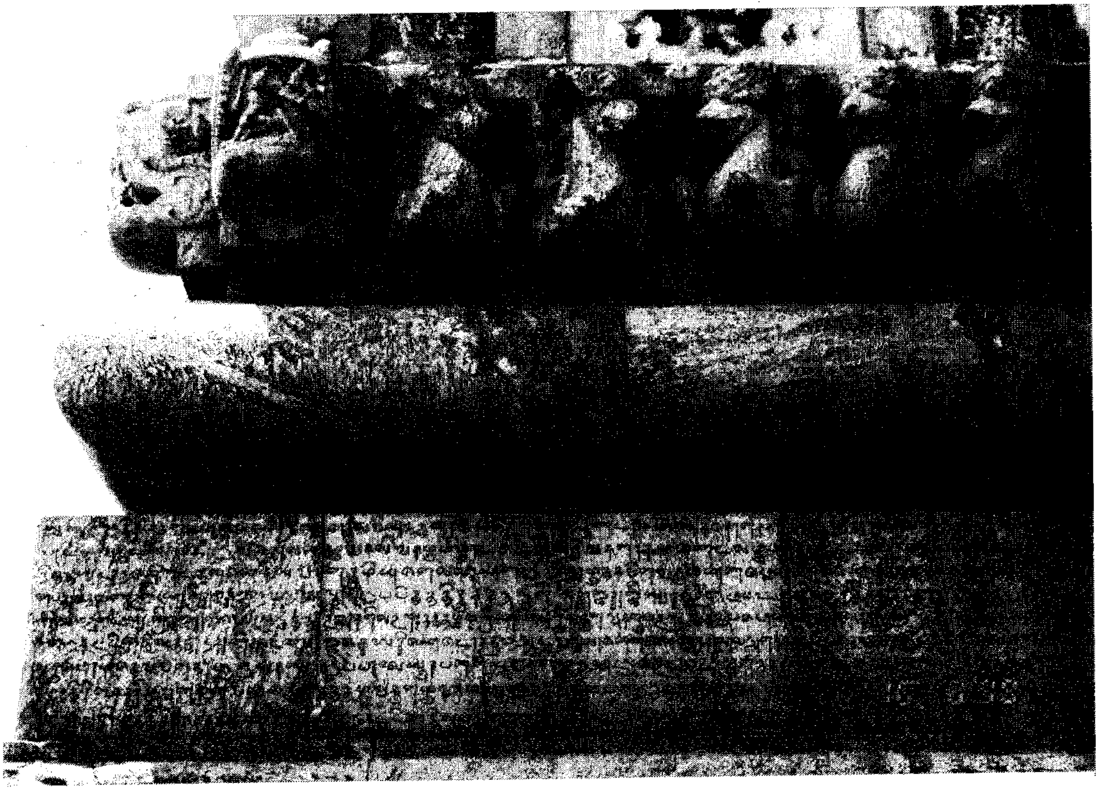

Figure 4.2 Pedestal Inscription of Brihadisvara Temple in Thanjavur
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

(the tax register), *mugaveṭṭi* (the royal stamp), *varipottaga-kaṇakku* (the accounts of the tax register), *variyiliḍu* (entry in the tax register), and *paṭṭōlai* (the palm-leaf record writer (Shanmugam 1997; Subbarayalu 2012: 226 and 234). In the Karandai copper-plate inscription of Rajendra I (Krishnan 1984), recording hi grant of more than 50 villages to 1,080 Brahmanas, the names of the revenue officers, witl their titles and villages to which they belonged are mentioned as the executors (see Figure 4.3) Names of the other executors coming from th

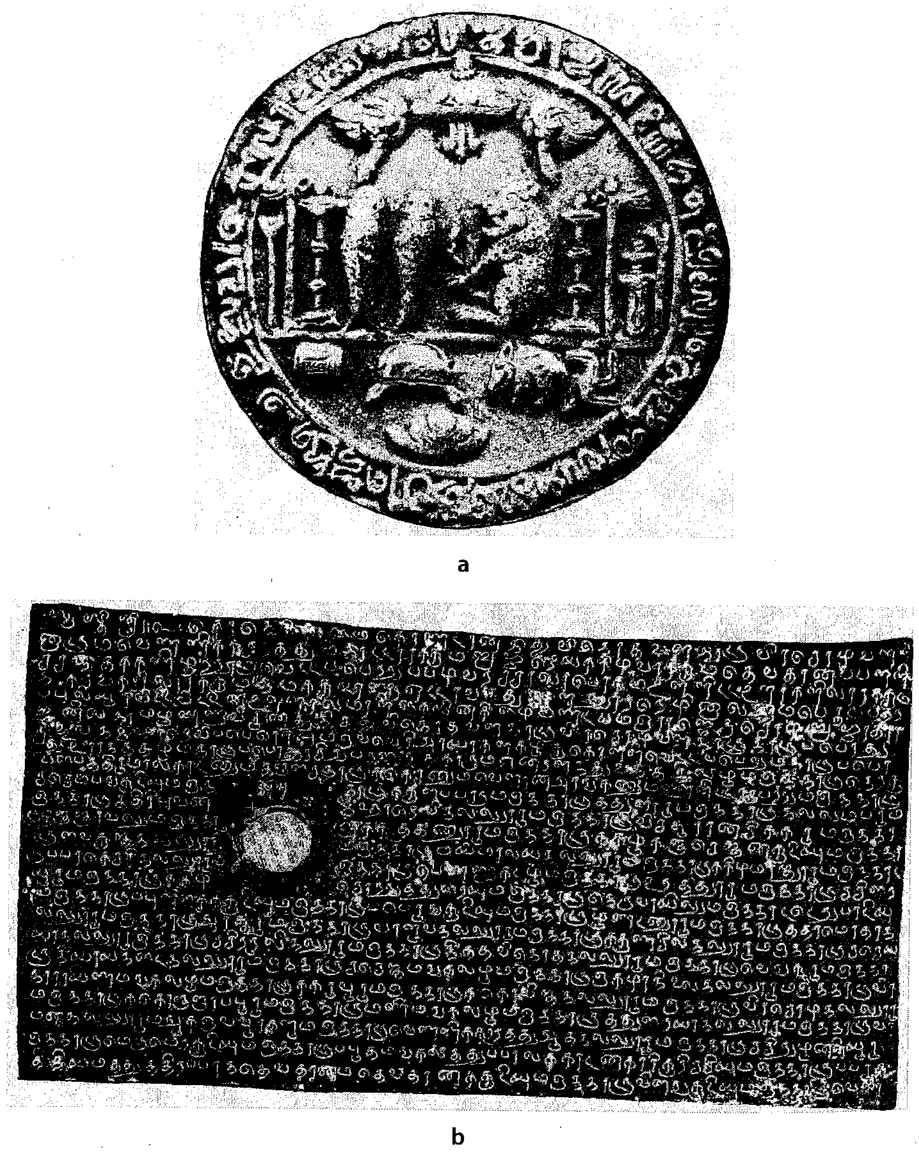

Figure 4.3 (a) Seal with Legend and (b) the Beginning of the Tamil Portion of the Karandai Plates
Source: Courtesy of the Archaeological Survey of India.

secretariat and the local administration office such as *nāḍu-vagai* (tax settlement of the *nāḍu*) are likewise mentioned. The total number of all the officers thus described in this copper-plate inscription exceeds 40. This alone proves the existence of a fairly well-developed officialdom in the Chola state.

The important officers who worked for the king as secretaries and others apart from those in the revenue department included the *tirumandira-ōlai* or simply *ōlai* who was the royal scribe or personal secretary to the king, *naḍuvirukkai*, learned Brahmanas probably working on judicial matters, *uḍankūṭṭam*, the court officials, and *viḍaiyil* who carried out the royal order in tour. These high-ranked officers, often called *adikāri*, had some imposing titles prefixed by the king's name, for example, *Rājarāja-mūvēndavēḻān* (given to Vellalas), *Rajēndrachōḻa-brahmarāyan* (given to Brahmanas), *Kulōttungachōḻa-pallavarāyan* (given to Vellalas or other non-Brahmanas), and so on, which were conferred by the respective king whose name was prefixed. Military chiefs called *sēnāpati* and *daṇḍanāyakam* also bore such titles. Another notable officer was the *śrīkāriyam* who supervised temple affairs for the state. These officers appear to have been hierarchically graded.

Though the bureaucratic framework was not very elaborate, most of the offices described above had been created by the time of Rajaraja I and most of them continued to function up to the end of the Chola state. Rajaraja I is known to have conducted land surveys by introducing a standard land measurement unit (Karashima 2009: 91–6). In the inscriptions of Rajendra I, we find references to a new measuring rod called *māḻigai-kōl* (palace rod), which must have been used in the land survey conducted by his father.

It is not easy to get accurate information on the revenue system of the Cholas, as there are no extant sources that throw light on their tax system in its entirety. To understand it, we have to collate all the tax terms from inscriptions. The number of terms, which seem to refer to a tax or due and which have been collected from published Chola inscriptions recording a land grant and/or tax imposition or exemption in the two core *maṇḍalams*, amounts to 422 (Karashima 1984: 74–84). This is a big number, which suggests that Chola taxation was quite arbitrary and without a clear rationale. However, if we statistically examine the inscriptions in which these tax terms appear, we can discern a certain logic. There are 27 terms, featuring in more than ten different inscriptions. If we check these terms (inscriptions) chronologically by dividing the Chola rule into four periods[4] and topographically by differentiating the two *maṇḍalams* (Chola-mandalam and Jayangondachola-mandalam), some terms appear only in one *maṇḍalam* and/or in particular period(s) (see Map 4.2). However, there are seven terms that appear in both the *maṇḍalams* and in all the four periods. They are *antarāyam*, *echchōṟu*, *kaḍamai*, *kuḍimai*, *muṭṭai-āḷ*, *taṭṭār-pāṭṭam*, and *veṭṭi*.[5] These are considered to have been the main taxes, and thus we find an established principle in the Chola revenue system throughout its long rule, though we can infer the reforms in taxation in Period II and Period III from the increase in occurrence of certain terms and the appearance or disappearance of others during these periods reflecting the change in politico-economic conditions of the time.

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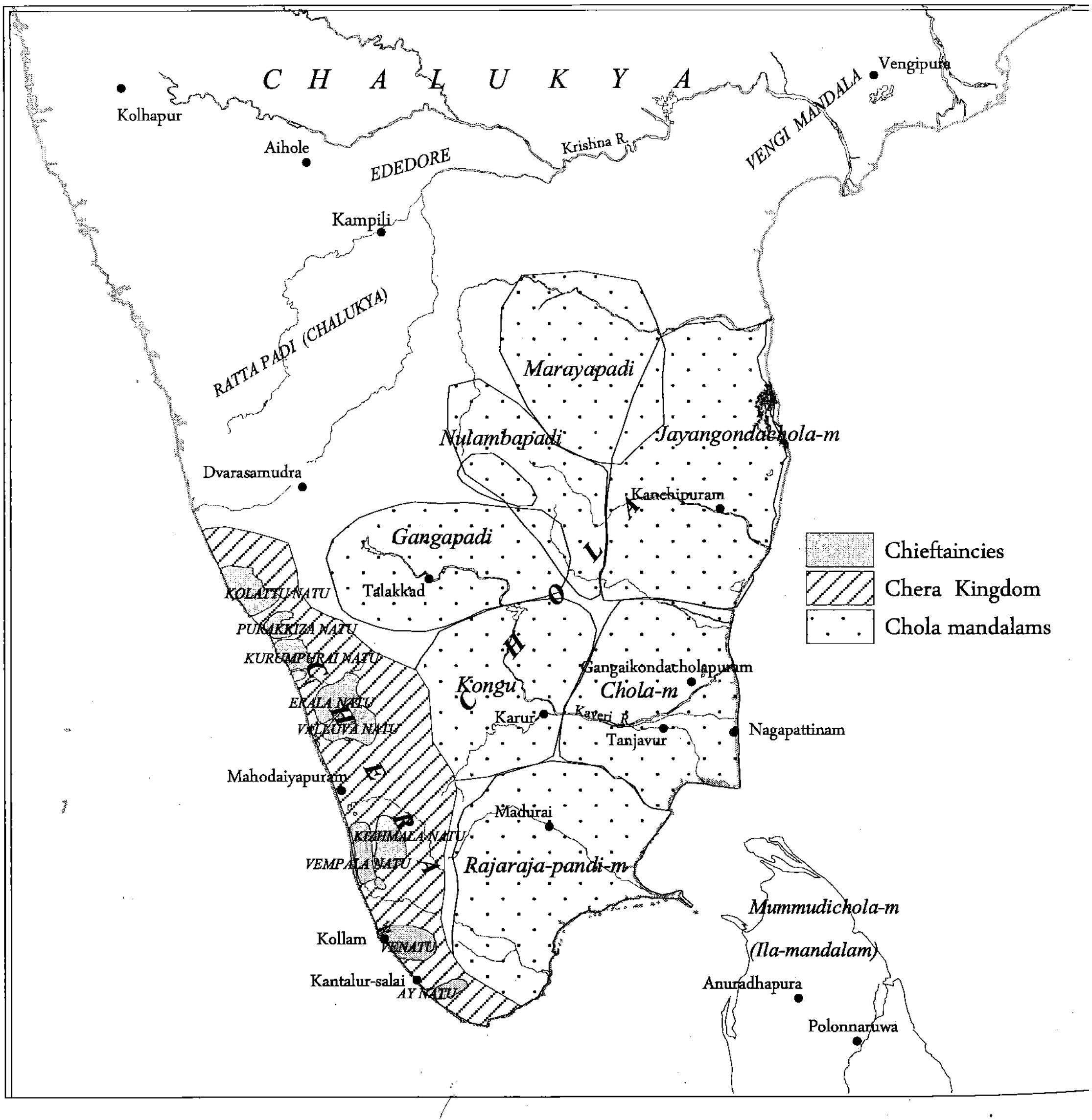
[4] Period I corresponds with the reign from Vijayalaya to Uttama (846–985 CE), Period II from Rajaraja I to Adirajendra (985–1070 CE), Period III from Kulottunga I to Rajadhiraja (1070–1179 CE), and Period IV from Kulottunga III to Rajendra III (1179–1279 CE).

[5] For these tax terms, see Karashima 1984: 69–94 and Subbarayalu 2012: 92–9.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Krishna R.
VENGI MANDALA
Vengipura
Kampili
RATTA PADI (CHALUKYA)
Dvarasamudra
Marayapadi
Nulambapadi
Jayangondachola-m
Kanchipuram
Gangapadi
Talakkad
CHOLA
KOLATTU-NATU
PURAKKIZA NATU
KURUMPURAI NATU
ERALA NATU
VALLUVA NATU
CHERA
Kongu
Karur
Kaveri R.
Gangaikondacholapuram
Chola-m
Tanjavur
Nagapattinam
Mahodaiyapuram
Madurai
KIZHMALA-NATU
VEMPALA NATU
Rajaraja-pandi-m
Mummudichola-m
(Ila-mandalam)
Anuradhapura
Polonnaruwa
Kollam
VENATU
Kantalur-salai
AY NATU
Chieftaincies
Chera Kingdom
Chola mandalams

Map 4.2 *Maṇḍalams* in the Chola State and Chieftaincies in Chera Kingdom
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

Among the seven terms mentioned above, *kaḍamai* and *kuḍimai* are taken as land tax, with the former being levied on landowners and the latter on cultivators. As the Chola state and economy depended heavily on agrarian production, cultivation of rice and other crops was encouraged. In Jayangondachola-mandalam tank water was used for irrigation and in Chola-mandalam river water. In the Kaveri delta in and after Period II, double-crop cultivation of rice seems to have been common (Karashima 1984: 94–105). Corvee or forced labour, denoted by the terms *muṭṭai-āḷ* and *veṭṭi*, was used for the maintenance of irrigation facilities by desilting tanks and riverbeds. *Antarāyam* and *taṭṭār-pāṭṭam* levied on merchants and artisans greatly increased in frequency in Period IV, indicating development other than agriculture towards the end of the Chola rule.

Rajaraja I and his successor Rajendra I obviously intended to centralize the state administration. This intention is also clear from the fact that Rajaraja I introduced the *vaḷanāḍu* (intermediate territorial division) in between the *nāḍu* (smaller territorial division) and the *maṇḍalam* (the largest territorial division) and entrusted the revenue collection of the area to the officers in this new division. The purpose must have been to weaken the local magnates' powers based on the kinship and regional ties in the *nāḍu*, the traditional agrarian unit for production. In the heyday of the Cholas, the state was divided into nine *maṇḍalams* (sometimes called *pāḍi*), including those in Sri Lanka and other conquered areas. In the reign of Rajaraja I, there were ten *vaḷanāḍus* in Chola-mandalam, which increased by the early twelfth century to fifteen as a result of bifurcation and rearrangement (Subbarayalu 1973: 66–7).[6]

As stated earlier, Rajaraja I occupied the northern part of Sri Lanka, and Rajendra I attacked Srivijaya in the Malacca Straits area by dispatching a naval expedition. Both sent envoys to the Chinese court, and all these efforts were to control the East–West maritime trade in the Indian Ocean. It is apparently clear that the middle period Chola kings were determined to build up a centralized and powerful state for themselves and in this they were successful to a certain extent. This view, therefore, refutes the segmentary state interpretation of the Chola rule projected by Stein and supports to a certain extent the position articulated by Sastri

As for the military system of the Chola state, no definite information is available,[7] though some names of regiments composing the military (*niyāyam*) are known from the Thanjavur inscriptions (*SII*, ii, 9, 11–19, and 54), which record the donation of money by servicemen to the deities installed in the temple by the royal family. Categories such as *villigaḷ* (archers), *kudiraichchēvagar* (cavalry), *ānaiyāḷgaḷ* (elephantry), *parivārattār* (palace guards), and *vēḷaikkāṟar* (probably royal guards[8]) comprise the regiments, the names of which are in most cases prefixed first by that of a king or prince followed by an adjective, *terinda*, meaning 'select'. Thus Keralantaka-terinda-parivarattar means 'select palace guards called Keralantaka'. Regiments of sword-bearers (*vāḷilār*) and spearmen (*kondavar*) are also known from other inscriptions. A Konerirajapuram inscription (*SII*, xxvi, 669: CE 997) mentions Rajaraja-terinda-kaikkolar. The Kaikkolar, who were a prominent weaving caste in the post-Chola centuries, seem to have been an important military group during the Chola period.

We have no evidence, however, as to how these soldiers were recruited by the government. This created a long controversy about the Chola military system—whether the state had a standing army or depended on mercenaries. Some scholars argued for the latter on the basis of a Polonnaruwa inscription (*EI*, xviii, 38, early twelfth century), which records the employment of Tamil *vēḷaikkāṟa* soldiers by a Simhala king for the protection of the temple of the Tooth-Relic of the Buddha in Polonnaruwa.[9] Although the *vēḷaikkāṟar* in the Polonnaruwa inscription may well be interpreted as mercenary troops, it does not necessarily mean that the Chola *velaikkarar* were mercenary. In this inscription, *vēḷaikkāṟar* were associated with merchants (*vaḷañjiyar* and *nagarattār*), and the relationship between the regiments of the Chola military, including the *vēḷaikkāṟar* and the soldiers (*vīrar, munai*, and others) employed by the merchant guild (*ainūṟṟuvar*) as their guards (see section 4.4) will be vital in future studies of the Chola military system (see Figure 4.4).

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[6] Rajendra I introduced *vaḷanāḍus* in Pandimandalam as well as in other *maṇḍalams* and Kulottunga I extended this set-up to Jayangondachola(Tondai)-mandalam too (Subbarayalu 2012: 214).

[7] For the military system of the Cholas, see Subbarayalu 2012: 228–31.

[8] Nilakanta Sastri interprets *vēḷaikkāṟar* as troops in the royal service ever-ready to defend the king with their lives when occasion (*vēḷai*) so demanded (Sastri 1955a: 454).

The 'segmentary state' theory advocated by Stein triggered heated discussions in the 1980s on state formation in ancient and medieval India, particularly in the early medieval period (Singh 2011: Introduction). The prominent models of state formation discerned by them, together with the models already presented before the 1980s, can be classified into:[10] (*a*) the unitary or imperial state model of the past nationalist scholars, including Nilakanta Sastri, emphasizing centralized administration; (*b*) the Indian feudalism model of R. S. Sharma and his followers (D. N. Jha, B. N. S. Yadava, R. N. Nandi, et al.), focusing on production relations in the fiefs and the decline of trade in the medieval period, following Marxist lines; (*c*) the segmentary state model of Burton Stein, denying the centralized structure of the state, which is viewed as integrated only ritually; and (*d*) the processual integrative state model, which can be treated as one, but was proposed and elaborated by the following scholars with some difference in the point of their emphasis on a particular aspect: (*a*) H. Kulke giving importance to the three-stage process of state formation, (*b*) B. Chattopadhyaya paying attention to the horizontal integration of *sāmantas* and the existence of 'autonomous spaces' in the state, and (*c*) B. P. Sahu discussing the regional and diachronic differences seen in the interaction between the centre and periphery in state formation.

We may add to the above some more, for example, the patrimonial–bureaucratic state

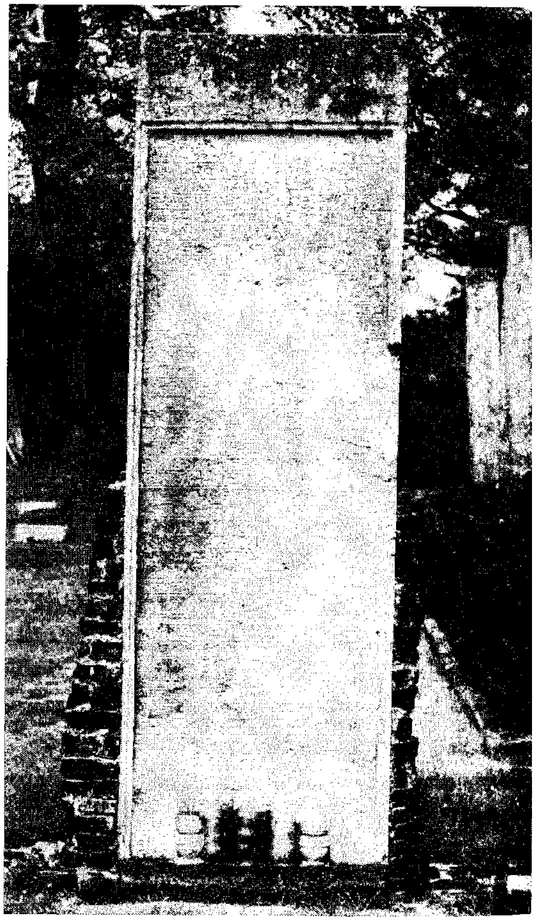

Figure 4.4 Polonnaruwa Stone Inscription of *Vēḷaikkāṟar*
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

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[9] Though denying the existence of a standing/permanent army, there are subtle interpretative differences among scholars on the nature of the army; interpretations such as militia, mercenary, and others. See Indrapala 1971, Hall 1980: 192, Stein 1980: 189–91.

[10] Information on these models is available in Kulke 1995, Kulke 2006, Singh 2011, Chattopadhyaya 2003, and Sahu 2013.

model applied by S. Blake to his study of the Mughal Empire, borrowing the concept from Max Weber, and the Brāhman oligarchy model of M. G. S. Narayanan, constructed through his study of the Cheraman Perumals.[11] Lastly the model which may be called the 'symbiotic state' model proposed by L. B. Alayev for early medieval south Indian states showing some similarity with the idea of 'autonomous spaces' given by Chattopadhyaya. According to Alayev, 'the Royal court, local magnates and collective organs of communities "penetrated" one into others, forming a symbiosis' and 'the mutual relations between the [these] actors of socio-political life were not regulated', which makes it difficult to define these states by using any readymade model, though they show some 'feudal' characteristics (Alayev 2011: 710 in summary in English).

Of course, there are many scholars who do not commit themselves to a single specific model listed here, and we should be cautious in applying these models to south India, as they were mostly articulated through the study of some state in another area. However, these new models have greatly enriched our knowledge of Indian states in general and in future, therefore, we should study south Indian states by examining the new ideas presented in them. Recent studies by some south Indian historians have already begun to respond accordingly.[12]

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[11] The Brahman oligarchy model will be described in section 4.5.

[12] Responses are found in Veluthat 2009, Karashima 2009, Gurukkal 2010, Champakalakshmi 2011, Alayev 2011, Mahalakshmi 2012, Subbarayalu 2012, and others.

4.3 CHANGES IN THE LANDHOLDING SYSTEM AND SOCIETY

NOBORU KARASHIMA

The Chola state was an agrarian one based on rice cultivation and organized in an agrarian production unit called the *nāḍu*. As already stated, *nāḍu* composed the smaller unit for state administration. Each *nāḍu* comprised, on an average, nearly ten villages or so, and some *nāḍu*s also had one or two towns called *nagaram*. Among the villages, we can discern two types: the *ūr* type, and the *brahmadēya* type. The former type was the traditional peasant village, where we find the village assembly called *ūr*, composed usually of Vellala landholders in most cases. In contrast, the *brahmadēya* type, far less numerous than the *ūr* type, was the village created in some fertile area by the king's grant for the benefit of learned Brahmanas during the Pallava and Chola periods. Each *brahmadēya* village had a village assembly called the *sabhā* and comprised Brahmana landholders. There are many inscriptions that record the various activities of the *sabhā*: the most famous example is Uttiramerur, studied by Nilakanta Sastri and others.[13]

As for the manner of landholding prevailing in the early Chola period, it seems that the land was held in common by the *ūr* members, who were also its cultivators. Individual or private landholding in an *ūr* seems to have been restricted at that time to persons who performed some special service for the *ūr*, for example, to dancers, astrologers, and controllers of the head sluices. Land was given to them as emoluments for their service. Ordinary Brahmanas, on the contrary, held land individually in *brahmadēyas* even during this early period,[14] although some land was held in common by the *sabhā* members. This contrast in landholding pattern between *brahmadēyas* and *ūrs* was first clarified by a comparative study of a *brahmadēya* and an *ūr*, both near Tiruchirappalli town, and has been confirmed as a general phenomenon by subsequent studies (Karashima 1984: 3–15). In *brahmadēyas*, Vellalas who lived in villages (*piḍākai*) attached to and surrounding the *brahmadēya* cultivated the land and, therefore, the landholders, as a class, were separated from cultivators.

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[13] A comprehensive study of this village and the constitution and functions of its corporate body, the *sabhā*, was first made by Nilakanta Sastri (1932). Other somewhat detailed studies on this village are Aiyer 1967 and Gros and Nagaswamy 1970.

Contrary to the collective landholding patterns in the *ūrs* during the early Chola period, we find individual landholding prevailing there in the later period. Actually, we find many later Chola inscriptions, which record land transfers from one individual to another by mentioning their personal names. On the wall of the Tiruvanaikka temple in Jambukesvaram, close to Tiruchirappalli, many inscriptions have survived from the time of Rajaraja III and Rajendra III of the early thirteenth century, which record the sale/donation of land to this islet temple. Five inscriptions record the sale in a certain village of five plots of land which constituted the whole village. They were sold by 39 persons whose names were known; the records also revea that the plots were once owned by an *uḍaiyān* (meaning 'possessor') title-holder and his younger brother, from whom the 39 individuals had purchased the land they sold later. Another inscription records the sale of some other village by an individual who held the titles of *uḍaiyān* and *arayan*.[15] This seller also appears in another inscription as a seller of three *vēli* of land in some other village, and in yet another inscription as a donor of seven-and-odd *vēli* of land in two plots in a third village. He had inherited all these lands from one of his ancestors who, in turn, is stated to have purchased the land from people who had obtained it at a government auction (*peruvilai*)[16] (Karashima 1984: 15–31).

The above trend is also attested to by statistical studies of Chola inscriptions. Subbarayalu has put together Table 4.1 by counting the number of sellers or donors of land recorded in published Chola inscriptions. The figures show a remarkable increase of non-Brahmana individuals as sellers or donors over a period of time in contrast to a decrease of Brahmanas.[17]

Table 4.1 Chronological Appearance Pattern of Sellers/Donors in Published Chola Inscriptions

Period[18]	*Sabhā*	Brahmana	*Ūr*	Non-Brahmana Individual	Temple
I 875–985	52.5%	28.8	16.5	1.4	0.7
II 986–1070	40.0	10.9	30.9	5.5	12.7
III 1071–1178	50.0	15.4	23.1	7.69	3.8
IV 1179–1279	20.7	6.9	24.1	44.8	3.4

Source: Subbarayalu 2012, p. 117; modified here by dropping the actual number of sellers and also the counting of buyer cases.

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[14] In some cases there is a possibility of periodical redistribution of land among the holders. Karashima 2009: 89.

[15] *Arayan* and its variants, *araiyan*, *arasu*, *rājan*, and so on, literally meaning 'king', are titles given to important officers and personages. They are usually prefixed by some caste or family-like names such as Brahma, Pallava, Chedi, and so on.

[16] For government auction of land, see Karashima 2009: 68–70.

[17] The study by Karashima reveals the same tendency (Karashima 1984: 14).

From the above table it is clear that individual landholding became quite prevalent during the later period. As a result, big landlords appeared who accumulated large extents of land in certain localities towards the end of the Chola rule. This later situation was thus quite in contrast to the early Chola periods and, therefore, the question 'what caused this change?' needs to be probed.

Just as in the case of the land grants to Brahmanas from the Pallava period, the Chola kings of the middle period started granting land to high officials as their prebendal tenure called *jīvitam* ('for living') or *janma-kāṇi* ('life-time holding') in fertile areas like the Kaveri delta. The grantees, therefore, became individual holders of land in some *ūrs* with the title of *uḍaiyān* or *kiḻavan* (meaning 'possessor') often prefixed by the name of the *ūr*. Two Jambukesvaram inscriptions tell us that in 1199, the king, Kulottunga III, granted a Paluvur-kilavan, as his *janma-kāṇi*, two hamlets extending as a whole to 92-odd *vēlis* and that the latter had to pay a certain amount of *kaḍamai* (tax) on them. Another Jambukesvaram inscription reveals that the same Paluvur-kilavan had five more villages as his *janma-kāṇi* in the Paluvur area (Karashima 2009: 72).

A statistical analysis of the titles held by individuals as seen in inscriptions reveals an increase of *uḍaiyān*-title holders in the Kaveri delta area towards the end of the Chola rule. Table 4.2 shows the percentage of *uḍaiyān*-title holders among individuals mentioned in inscriptions in the Thanjavur and Tiruchirappalli districts in each of the four periods (as they appear in Table 4.1).

This practice of granting land to officials that started in the middle period subsequently led to many land transfers among individuals, finally resulting in the spread of individual landholding in *ūrs* during the later period. A huge amount of treasure acquired from the conquered areas in the middle period was distributed to the people of the central area and was invested in the improvement of irrigation and other agricultural facilities, which greatly increased the value of land in the Kaveri delta. Rich people holding the title of *uḍaiyān*, *kiḻavan*, or *arayan*, began to purchase land so extensively in the twelfth century that the state had to issue an order to restrict land transfers to protect the old landholders in the delta (Karashima and Subbarayalu 2007).

Notwithstanding the government's efforts to check land purchases, the trend of land transfers continued and became even stronger towards the end of the Chola rule. As we have seen in the foregoing, some inscriptions refer to the sale of entire villages by individuals who had come to own them through a number of earlier purchases. There are also references to possession of more than a village as *janma-kāṇi* by individuals, with the sanction of the king, and to temples becoming large landholders by means of grants and through purchases.

In the early period, Brahmanas and Vellalas comprised the two important landholding communities, though the Brahmanas were

Table 4.2 Chronological Increase of *Udaiyān* Title Holders in Two Districts

	Period I	Period II	Period III	Period IV
Thanjavur	11.4	12.5	15.9	22.6
Tiruchirappalli	4.3	14.4	16.9	17.6

Source: Karashima 1984: 57 (revised).

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[18] This periodization is explained in note 2 in section 4.2.

numerically much weaker. Frequent occurrence of land transfers among individuals in and after the middle Chola period, however, made it possible for communities other than these two, for example Chettis and Kaikkolas, also to purchase land and become landholders. Moreover, in some twelfth-century inscriptions we come across evidence of land purchase on the northern bank of the Kaveri in Tiruchirappalli district by Surudimans, Pallis, and other ex-hill tribes who increased the power of their communities while serving the state as archers in the army and later became agriculturists by moving down to the plains.[19]

In the smaller administrative division, the assembly called *nāḍu* or *nāṭṭār,* formed by the representatives of the *ūr*-type villages in *nāḍu,* included organized agrarian production (Subbarayalu 2012: 124–37). It also played an important role in local administration by working with the government to collect tax from the villagers or, on occasion, defending the villagers against the oppression of the government or the landlords.[20] As the landholders in the *ūrs* were Vellalas in the early period, they naturally constituted the *nāḍu* members and controlled local affairs. However, with the appearance of landholders from communities other than the Vellalas in the middle period, the composition of *nāṭṭārs* also changed from a Vellala monopoly to the inclusion of other communities during the later stages of the Chola rule.

In the fringe areas where the former hil tribes became landholders during the latte half of the Chola period, or even in thei traditional hilly areas where they remaine non-agriculturalists, the tribes formed *nāḍ* assemblies of their own by imitating the practices of the central area. Thus, in the twelft century, we find in the hilly and semi-ari areas of Tiruchirappalli and South Arcot districts *pan-nāṭṭār* and *añchu-nāṭṭār*, which wer *nāḍu* assemblies of the Pallis and Surudiman respectively (Karashima and Subbarayal 2004). We shall examine these assemblies i more detail in the next chapter.

Some members of these ex-hill tribes, such a the Kadavas, Malaiyaman, and Sambuvas, ros to become local chiefs in the twelfth century i the Tiruchirappalli, South Arcot, North Arcot, and Chengalpat districts. During the thirteenth century they fought each other and becam virtually independent from the state and levied *pāḍikāval* (protection) tax on the people of thei locality. They even threatened the central power, as stated in the first section of this chapter. In the twelfth century, there appeared anothe *nāḍu* organization called *periya-nāḍu* (literally 'big *nāḍu*'). In inscriptions it is sometimes equated with '78 *nāḍus*', indicating that it actually covered a very large area.[21] Often prefixed with the word *chitramēḻi,* meaning 'beautiful plough', it was presumably a peasant organization. All these were the result of changes in the landholding system during the middle Chola period which, in turn, caused social changes in the Tamil country. The next chapter deals with the emergence of the *periya-nāḍu.*

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[19] The government order mentioned in the foregoing account banned land purchase on the northern bank of the Kaveri too, though the main purpose seems to have been to save the *kāṇiyāḷar* on the southern bank, the most fertile area of the delta.

[20] In the thirteenth century, *pēriḷamai-nāṭṭār* (a small *nāḍu* organization of Vellala cultivators in the *brahmadēyas*) fought against the oppression of Brahmana landlords (Subbarayalu 2012: 154).

[21] The number 78, or sometimes 79, is merely indicative and is not to be taken literally. It just means 'many'.

4.4 MARITIME TRADE AND MERCHANT ACTIVITIES

NOBORU KARASHIMA

Many *nāḍus*, as stated earlier, included one or two *nagarams* along with *brahmadēya*- and *ūr*-type villages. *Nagarams* were commercial towns inhabited by merchants such as Chettis (general merchants) and Sankarapadiyars (oil merchants), and artisans like Saliyas (weavers) and Tattars (goldsmiths). Representatives of leading communities composed a town assembly called *nagaram*, but their commercial activities were not so vigorous in the early Chola period. The members of the *nagaram* seem to have held and got income from land though they may not have cultivated it themselves (Karashima et al. 2008). Instead, itinerant merchants who were organized in guilds such as *maṇigirāmam* and *ainūṟṟuvar* carried out commercial activities in the early period (Abraham 1988; Champakalakshmi 1996).

Though the first reference to *maṇigirāmam* is found in an inscription ascribable to the fifth century (Ramesh 1984: No.11), the Kottayam inscription of Sthanu Ravi in the ninth century gives more concrete information about it.[22] The origin of the *ainūṟṟuvar* is often traced back to the mention of the organization of that name (*ainūruvaru*) in some eighth-century inscriptions in Ayyavole (Aihole) in Karnataka, but we have references to them in early Chola inscriptions too (Karashima 2009: 199–223). Many of them come from the Pudukottai and Tiruchirappalli districts, and Kodumbalur seems to have been a centre for *maṇigirāmam* merchants. In Kerala, we find another guild, called *añjuvaṇṇam*, organized by Jewish, Christian, and Islamic merchants from West Asian countries (Subbarayalu 2012: 176–87). However, the *maṇigirāmam* and *añjuvaṇṇam* seem to have been incorporated later into the *ainūṟṟuvar* organization which, in and after the twelfth century, acted as an umbrella organization to cover all other smaller merchant guilds.

As seen in Table 4.3, there are many merchant guild inscriptions in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Sri Lanka recording donations to temples

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[22] This inscription (*TAS*, ii, 9) records that the local chief, Sthanu Ravi, granted land and labourers to a Christian church in Kollam and entrusted its maintenance to *añjuvaṇṇam* and *maṇigirāmam*.

Table 4.3 Chronological and Topographical Distribution of Merchant Guild Inscriptions

Year	AP	KL	KN	MH	TN	SL	SEA	Total
800–900		1	2		1		1	5
901–1000		2	1	0	24		0	27
1001–1100	5	3	24		18	1	1	52
1101–1200	6	0	56	2	12	11		87
1201–1300	9	2	33		46	1	2	93
1301–1400	6	0	8		11	2		27
1401–1600	9	0	6		5			20
Undated		0	2		1			3
Total	35	8	132	2	118	15	4	314

Source: Karashima 2009, p. 201.

Note: Abbreviations are: AP = Andhra Pradesh, KL = Kerala, KN = Karnataka, MH = Maharashtra, TN = Tamil Nadu, SL = Sri Lanka, and SEA = Southeast Asia.

by individual members or made on the basis of decisions taken in their large assemblies, sometimes together with the members of a peasant organization called *chitramēḻi-periyanāḍu*. Some inscriptions record an important decision made by certain members of their communities and may have nothing to do with donations to temples. Such inscriptions have also been found in Andhra Pradesh and in certain Southeast Asian countries. Table 4.3 reveals an increase in the number of inscriptions from the eleventh century, its peak being in the thirteenth century and decline thereafter until in the fifteenth century and later there remained only a small number of them. Zheng He, a famous Chinese general, led his fleet to the Indian Ocean at the beginning of the fifteenth century[23] and at the end of the same century Vasco da Gama arrived at Kozhikode by sailing around the Cape of Good Hope from Europe. The fifteenth century was, therefore, a turning point in trade activities in the Indian Ocean, but the reason for the decline of the local merchant guilds is not clear.[24]

Most of the inscriptions that record decisions made in a big assembly contain at the beginning a eulogy of the *ainūṟṟuvar*, saying they carried out their commercial activities in several towns (*paṭṭanams*) and ports (*vēḻāpuram*) spread over eighteen countries (*padineṉ-vishayam/bhūmi*) across the ocean; they were proud of their lineage from the three gods, Vasudeva, Kandali, and Mulabhadra; they had a close relationship with Aihole through its deity Paramesvari (Durga); and they considered honesty and bravery as their professional *dharma* as enjoined by their charter. Various merchant groups such as Chetti, Kavarai, and Katriban are mentioned as their components and some soldier groups (*vīrar*, *munai*, and others) are also found as their guards and servants (see Figure 4.5).

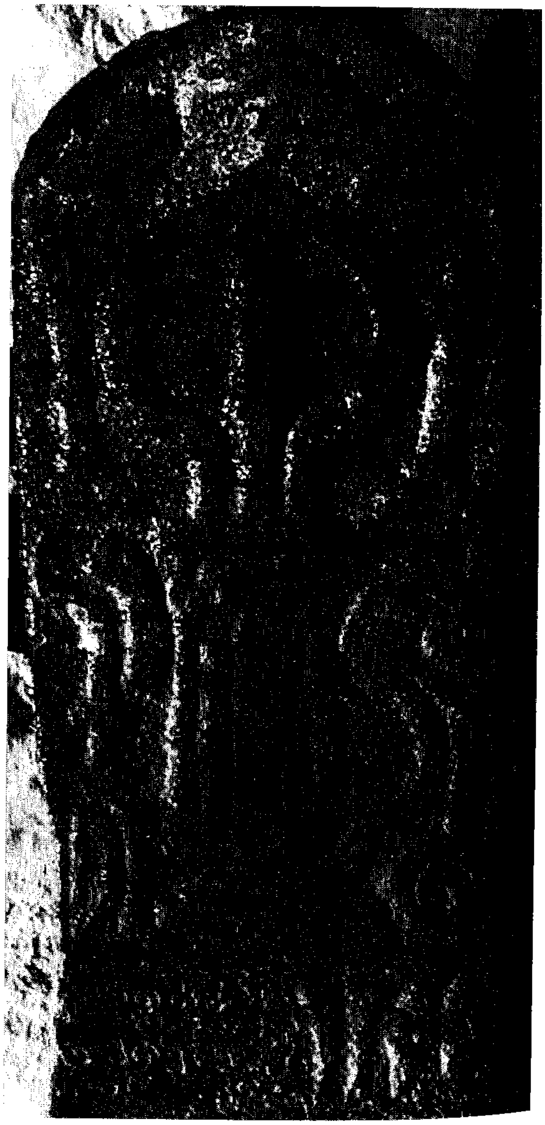

Figure 4.5 Trade Guild Symbols of Singalantapuram Inscription
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

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[23] A record of his voyages was written by Ma Huan and Fei Xin, who accompanied him, as *Ying-yai Sheng-lan* and *Xing-cha Sheng-lan* respectively. The former was translated into English (Mills 1970).

[24] Abu-Lughod discussed the decline of merchant activities in general during this period (Abu-Lughod 1989), but the particular reason for its decline in south Asia needs to be investigated. Probably this was related to the establishment of the Vijayanagar rule, particularly the management of trade by *nāyakas*.

There are several inscriptions in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka that record that the *ainūṟṟuvar* merchants lauded the bravery of the soldiers protecting them, naming the town where both of them lived *eṟivīrapaṭṭinam* meaning 'town of brave soldiers'.[25]

The increase in *ainūṟṟuvar* inscriptions as well as the incorporation of other merchant organizations into it in the eleventh century was certainly related to the development of overseas trade, which is also attested to by the recent discoveries in south India of many Chinese ceramic sherds dating back to the eleventh century and after—the bulk being datable to the thirteenth century and after (Karashima 2009: 224–51). There are many contemporary Arabic, Chinese, and European accounts describing the merchant activities in the Indian Ocean.[26] This development of overseas trade in and after the eleventh century caused a change in the characteristics of the *nagaram* too. As stated earlier, commercial activities in the *nagarams* were not prolific in the early period, but they became very vibrant in and after the eleventh century, having been associated with the *ainūṟṟuvar* network (Karashima et al. 2008).

An inscription from Kovilpatti dated to 1305 (Karashima 2002: 281–2), recording a charity deed decided in an *ainūṟṟuvar* assembly specifies that contributions to a temple would actually be made by members of four specified *nagarams* in the area where the temple was located and stipulates the share of their contribution. Though the names of the *nagarams* are not mentioned, a Sarkar Periyapalaiyam inscription of 1289 (*Avanam* 6, 12-9) records that many *nagarams* in Malaimandalam (Kerala) joined in making charitable donations by *ainūṟṟuvar*, and it is clear from such instances that the *ainūṟṟuvar* consolidated their activities by including within their ambit *nagarams* of various places.

It is known from the Cairo Geniza documents that Jewish merchants in Cairo and Aden had close trade relations with India. Documents (letters) from the twelfth century (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 314–17) also record the following trade items: iron, cardamom, pepper, areca nuts, cubeb (Java pepper), ginger, coir (coconut fibre), aloes wood, mango, and coconuts. Similar commodities are recorded in the inscriptions of south Indian merchant guilds too: pepper, areca nuts, betel leaf, ginger, mustard, turmeric, paddy, rice, grains, salt, oil, sandal, musk, iron, cotton threads, and cloth, besides more precious items such as jewels, horses, camels, and elephants. Frequent references to cotton, oil, and iron in inscriptions indicate the development of industries in south India for cloth, oil, iron implements, and weapons.[27] Horses, camels, and elephants were very important in wars and hence greatly in demand by the king.

There are several Tamil inscriptions in Southeast Asia recording the activities of these merchant organizations (Karashima 2002: 10–18): a Takua Pa inscription (ninth century) in Thailand refers to a *maṇigirāmam* that was asked to protect a tank; a Barus inscription (1088) in northwestern Sumatra to *ainūṟṟuvar* who

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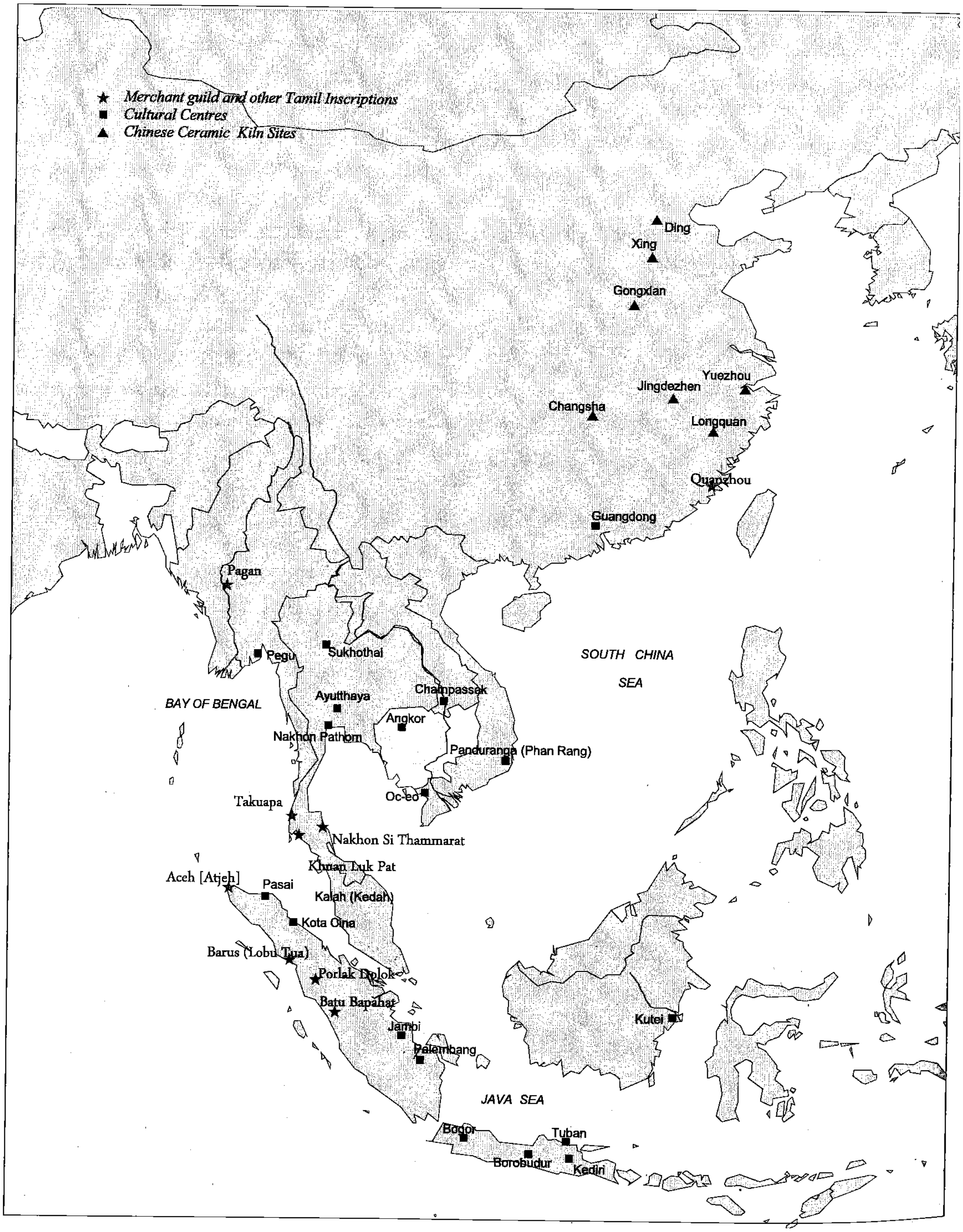
[25] An example in Tamil Nadu is found in the Samuttirapatti inscription (*Avanam* 2, 2-3) and that in Sri Lanka in the Viharahinna inscription (Karashima 2002: 32–4). For *eṟivīrapaṭṭinam* see Karashima 2009: 204–5.

[26] English translations of many important passages of these works are collected in Sastri 1939. Abu-Lughod 1989 and Chaudhuri 1990 provide information on recent works on them. For Arab works in particular, see Nainar 1942, and for Chinese books, Karashima 2009 (Appendix 13.2).

[27] Indian iron ingots exported from south India are believed to have been used to forge the famous 'Damascus sword' which harassed the Crusaders (Srinivasan and Ranganathan 2004: 48–9).


★ Merchant guild and other Tamil Inscriptions
■ Cultural Centres
▲ Chinese Ceramic Kiln Sites
Ding
Xing
Gongxian
Yuezhou
Jingdezhen
Changsha
Longquan
Quanzhou
Guangdong
Pagan
Pegu
Sukhothai
SOUTH CHINA SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
Ayutthaya
Champassak
Angkor
Nakhon Pathom
Panduranga (Phan Rang)
Takuapa
Oc-eo
Nakhon Si Thammarat
Khuan Luk Pat
Aceh [Atjeh]
Pasai
Kalah (Kedah)
Kota Cina
Barus (Lobu Tua)
Porlak Dolok
Batu Bapahat
Jambi
Palembang
Kutei
JAVA SEA
Bogor
Tuban
Borobudur
Kediri

Map 4.3 Places of Merchant Guild Inscriptions, Indian Cultural Influence, and Kiln Sites of Chinese Ceramics
Source: Redrawn from Karashima 2009: 204.
Note: Map not to scale and does not depict authentic international boundaries.

established their town (*paṭṭanam*) in Barus, a port famous for the camphor trade; and a Pagan inscription (thirteenth century) in Myanmar to *nānādēsi* (another name for *ainūṟṟuvar*), which established a *maṇḍapam* in a Vishnu temple. There is in Quanzhou in southern China a thirteenth-century Tamil inscription recording the building of a Siva temple there. Though no merchant organization finds mention in the Quanzhou inscription, there must have been a considerable number of Tamil merchants there. These inscriptions testify to the vigorous activities of south Indian, particularly Tamil, merchants in Southeast and East Asia (see Map 4.3).

The distribution of inscriptions referring to individual merchants and merchant organizations reveals that they were also prominent in Kerala and Karnataka. In the inscriptions of the twelfth century and after, we find references to horse merchants, and in Kerala there seem to have been many centres for import of horses. Marco Polo, who visited Kayal (Cail) in the Pandyan country towards the end of the thirteenth century, mentions Arab ships carrying a large number of horses to that town from the Persian Gulf and Arabia (Moule and Pelliot 1938: 412). In Karnataka, the activities of the *ainūṟṟuvar* were equally vigorous under the Chalukyan rule, especially in the twelfth century as seen in Table 4.3, though we are not sure whether we can identify Aihole as their place of origin. We have *ainūṟṟuvar* inscriptions in Andhra Pradesh too, though not as many as in other areas. There are, however, some important inscriptions, like two in Vishakhapatnam dated to 1090 and the beginning of the thirteenth century respectively, which refer to *añjuvaṇṇam*, associated with *ainūṟṟuvar*, and their relations with Sri Lanka and Sumatra (Karashima 2009: 219).

The brisk trade carried out by merchants towards the end of this period was of course closely related to the development of certain industries in south India such as weaving, smithing, and oil-pressing, and also to the increasing importance of temple rituals that required camphor, coconuts, and so on, but this growing tendency becomes more conspicuous in and after the fourteenth century and we shall discuss it in some detail in section 6.3.

4.5 STATES IN THE DECCAN AND KERALA

NOBORU KARASHIMA

The structure of the Deccan states of the period seems to have been somewhat different from that of the Cholas in the Tamil country. Comparing the state rule of the Chalukyas of Kalyani and the Cholas, Nilakanta Sastri writes: 'The administration of the Chola empire was stricter and more centralized than that of the Chalukyas, who employed a staff of highly trained diplomats (*sandhivigrahis*) to serve as liaison officers between the emperor and the feudatories in the various parts of the empire' (Sastri 1955: 201). Besides *sandhivigrahi* we find in Chalukyan inscriptions many more high officials; they were the *mahāmaṇḍalēśvara* (provincial governor), the *mahāpradhāna* (chief minister), the *mahāmātya* (chief minister), the *daṇḍanāyaka* (general), the *dharmādhikāri* (justice), and others. *Sāmanta* was the title held by feudatories, and so was at times the *mahāmaṇḍalēśvara*. However, these offices or titles seem to have been often held simultaneously, as seen in the following two cases. The first was Somesvara Bhatta, an eminent Brahmana officer holding the title of *mahāpradhāna* and *daṇḍanāyaka*, who was appointed also as *dharmādhikārin* by Vikramaditya VI (*EI*, xv, p. 24; Sastri 1960: 391). The other, Dandanayaka Mahadeva, also held the title of *mahāpradhāna*, *sandhivigrahi*, *manevergaḍe* (palace officer), and *mahāsāmantādhipati* (great lord of feudatories) during the reign of Vikramaditya VI (*EI*, xiii, p. 4A).

It is a bit strange that a single person held so many offices at the same time. We may presume, therefore, that either these were honorific titles apart from the actual assignment of the office, or some of them were old offices that the officer had held earlier at some point and retained later only in name. Anyway, this plurality of offices or titles held by the higher ranks was also seen in the Hoysala bureaucracy where we find more or less the same titles as that of the Chalukyan offices or titles. One example is found in the Hemmanahalli inscription (*EC*, NS, v, My-215: CE 1175), which records the grant of income from taxes and an oil mill by one Bittimeyya who was *mahāpradhāna*, *sarvādhikāri* (general officer), and *daṇḍanāyaka*.

In the Hoysala inscriptions we come across a larger number of holders of the *sāmanta* or *maṇḍalika* titles, such as the Chengalvas, Kongalvas, and Santharas, who were once independent but later subdued by the Hoysalas. Earlier, during the Rashtrakuta period also, there are references to *mahāsāmanta*s and *mahāmaṇḍalēśvara*s, who ruled certain territories in the Telugu country semi-independently, including Mahamandalesvara Bhimarasar who ruled over Hanumakonda and Mahasamanta Sankaraganda who ruled over Kollipake-2,000 (territorial name with a number often seen in medieval Deccan—to be explained later) (Murthy 1994: 115–16). On the basis of this frequent appearance of the *mahāsāmanta*, *maṇḍalika* or *mahāmaṇḍalēśvara* titles in inscriptions, we may be tempted to apply the concept of the feudal or *sāmanta* state to these medieval Deccan states, particularly the Hoysalas.[28] It seems, however, that the holding of multiple offices or titles does not mean that those who held the *sāmanta* or *maṇḍalika* title could automatically be regarded as semi-independent local rulers or fief-holders. We need to examine the condition of their holding these titles and their governance of the territory more closely.

R. N. Nandi interprets medieval Deccan as a period when feudalism developed over a course of three stages (Nandi 2000). According to him, the first stage, between the seventh and eighth centuries, witnessed the networking of domains of surplus appropriation in fiefs, service tenements, Brahmana free-holdings, and the temple *dēvadāna*s enjoying varying degrees of autonomy. The second stage, during the ninth and tenth centuries, was characterized by the extension of arable land, new drainage devices, adoption of new crops, and labour servitude, necessitated by the rise of the non-peasant population. The third and final stage, comprising the eleventh and twelfth centuries, saw the manifestation of these developments, namely large-scale commodity production, recirculation of minted money, and urban revival. The *sāmanta/maṇḍalika* issue is discussed in relation to the fiefs and service tenements granted to professional warriors and administrators, together with the examination of state honours given to vassals (Nandi 2000: 48 and 39).

Nandi's study contains many interesting points that are useful for comparison with the conditions seen in Tamil Nadu, particularly those in the Chola state during that period. They are, for example, Gavunda chiefs and

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[28] For the proposal of feudal state and *sāmanta* state formations, see section 4.2.

heggaḍe revenue officers (p. 36) vis-à-vis the Chola Vellala *nāṭṭārs* (Subbarayalu 2012: 124–37); *kalnāḍ* military tenure (p. 37) vis-à-vis *paḍai-paṟṟu* or *parigraham* tenure in the Chola state (Karashima 2009: 71); the increase in the power of merchants and artisans in the eleventh and twelfth centuries in both regions; the conflicts between Brahmanas and peasants in the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries (pp. 23 and 125–7) that were witnessed in the Chola state (Subbarayalu 2012: 146–66); and the proliferation of castes (*jātis*) in the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, which was also seen in the Chola state (Karashima 2009: 106–14). In Nandi's discussion of the development of feudalism, however, the concept of feudalism has been diffused to the point of losing clarity (Nandi 2000: Introduction). For a comparison of the so-called *sāmanta/maṇḍalika* system with European or Japanese feudalism, we need to undertake several detailed case studies examining all the inscriptions concerned and employ statistical methods as well in their analysis.

In medieval Deccan, especially in Karnataka, there were a good number of territorial names that had a number suffixed to them, such as Kollipake-2000 cited earlier. This type of nomenclature appeared for the first time towards the end of the Badami Chalukyan rule, and its use spread during the periods of the Rashtrakutas and the Kalyani Chalukyas. Though the meaning of these numbers is still unclear, some scholars believe that the numbers (at least the smaller ones) represent the number of villages included in the territory (Adiga 2006: 14–18). Some inscriptions give a number followed by the term *grāma* (village), like the Aihole inscription (*EI*, vi, p. 1: CE 556) of Pulakesin II that refers to his territory of three Maharashtras with their 99,000 villages. This problem also concerns the issue of the state structure and requires further study.[29]

In Kerala, in the ninth century, we find another type of state ruled by the Ceraman Perumals, who had their seat at Mahodayapuram or Makotai (Kodungallur) and were quite different from the Chola state in Tamil Nadu or the Chalukya state in the Deccan. The rule of the Ceraman Perumals continued until the twelfth century, when it was dissolved into several local powers. According to M. G. S. Narayanan, until recently conventional historians had long regarded this state as a monarchy. In a recent article (Narayanan 2002: 116), he describes it as 'a bold and visible brahman oligarchy', altering even his own previous interpretation of it as 'a monarchy supported by a brahman oligarchy' (Narayanan 1996).

Sangam poetry provides some information on the Cera kings who ruled Kerala from Karur/Vanji and the society they presided over for about three hundred years at the beginning of the first millennium. For the next almost five hundred years, however, the history of Kerala is not clear as the 'Dark Age' continued (Veluthat 2009: 250). Though some scholars date Ceraman Perumal Nayanar and Kulasekhara Alvar, both known as *bhakti* saints, and Sankaracharya, the founder of the *advaita* philosophy, to the eighth century, the chronology in Kerala is not certain at all. Narayanan identifies the above two *bhakti* saints with the first and second kings of the Ceraman Perumal dynasty of

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[29] On the socio-economic conditions and local administration in ancient/medieval Deccan, particularly Karnataka, Dikshit 1964 was an important and pioneering work. Recently, however, some more studies have been done besides those by Nandi and Adiga referred to earlier. They include Basavaraja 1983, Shantakumari 1986, Parasher-Sen 1993, Reddy 1997, and Aruna 2000.

Mahodayapuram[30] which, according to him, ruled from the beginning of the ninth century. The state seems to have been established with the settlement of Nambudiri Brahmanas in Kerala who had migrated some time earlier from the north. From then on, more sources including inscriptions become available for our research on the conditions of the state and society.

Until the ninth century, Kerala had been in the tribal stage of society (Narayanan 2002: 116; Veluthat 2009: 251) over which the Brahmanism that the Nambudiris had brought from the north was superimposed. The Nambudiris soon acquired a large extent of land for themselves and for the temples they established in their settlements in the fertile area. They individually owned land (*brahmasvam*) in their villages and also held and managed the temple land (*dēvasvam*) as common property. Because of their position as landholders and due to the religious as well as social authority they wielded by enforcing the caste system (*varṇāśrama-dharma*), they became the lords of their respectively settled areas. The Brahmanas who managed the four temples (*nālutaḷi*) established in the capital became quite influential and functioned as a permanent council of ministers to the Perumal, the king. At the same time, however, there seems to have been in the capital a Kali temple managed by a committee of the Nayar caste that comprised the bodyguards of the Perumal. The counterparts of this group called 'Companions of Honour' existed in the *nāḍ* (*nāṭu*) divisions too, where chiefdoms (*nāṭuvāḷi*) were formed such as Venad in the south and Kolattunad in the north. These chief exercised political and military powers and fought against the invading Chola and Pandyan forces. However, in these localities too the Brahmanas wielded social power, regulating the daily life of the people in conformity with Brahmanism, and controlled the agrarian production by virtue of holding vast tracts o fertile lands for themselves and temples.

It is assumed, though we do not have any clear evidence, that the succession of the Perumals was matrilineal and that the Perumals had a Brahmana father and a non-Brahmana mother. They were, therefore, educated and trained to play their part as servants of the Brahmanas (Narayanan 2002: 110). Consequently, their kingship was only ritual and remained nominal compared with the great authority Brahmanas had religiously and socially and the power that local chiefs exercised politically and militarily. The power of the king was also restricted to the capital. Though this appears to be a case of so-called ritual sovereignty, Narayanan and other scholars assert that the rule of the Ceraman Perumals was different from Burton Stein's notion of ritual sovereignty because it was combined with Brahmana oligarchy.

During this period, maritime trade, which also included Muslim, Jewish, and Christian merchants, developed greatly. There exist in Kerala, copper-plate charters granted by the ruler to Jewish and Christian merchants settled in ports on the Malabar Coast.[31] We have noted in the previous section (section 4.4) the activities of a merchant guild of foreigners (*añjuvaṇṇam*) and of local merchants (*maṇigrāmam* and *ainūrrruvar*) in south India. With the development of both foreign trade and agriculture, the power of certain communities in some localities increased steadily during this period. This brought about, at the beginning of the twelfth century, the dissolution of the rule of the Ceraman Perumals, loosely unified and under the control of the Brahmana oligarchy. Consequently, the power of the chiefs of Venadu and Kolattunad increased, as did that of the rising chiefs of Kozhikode (the Zamorin) and Kochi.

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[30] He identifies Ceraman Perumal Nayanar with Rama Rajasekhara (c. 800–44), the first king, and Kulasekhara Alvar with Sthanu Ravi Kulasekhara, the second king (c. 844–83), (Narayanan 1996: 24–6).

[31] As noted elsewhere, there are two copper-plate inscriptions referring to such merchants: one (the early ninth century) to a Christian merchant in Kollam (*TAS*, ii, 9) and the other (c. 1000) to a Jewish merchant living in Kodungalur (*EI*, iii, p. 11).

The last Ceraman Perumal is said to have disappeared from the scene mysteriously after having partitioned his kingdom. According to a legend, he is believed to have converted to the Muslim faith and have gone on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Whatever the reason for his disappearance, his legend was engraved in the memory of the people and exercised significant political influence in the later centuries.[32]

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[32] His legend was used by the later political powers for the legitimation of their rule (Frenz 2003).

4.6 RELIGION AND SOCIETY

NOBORU KARASHIMA

Saivism was the creed of Hinduism most favoured by the Chola kings, and consequently the number of Saiva temples and *maṭhas* (monasteries) built during the Chola period far surpasses that of Vaishnava temples and *maṭhas*. The most important Siva temple was, without any doubt, the Rajarajesvara temple built in Thanjavur by Rajaraja I at the beginning of the eleventh century which, from the thirteenth century, came to be known as Brihadisvara temple. Rajendra I followed the example of his father by building another important temple (Rajendracholesvara/Brihadisvara temple) in Gangaikondacholapuram, the new capital he built on the northern bank of the Kaveri River. Rajaraja I and Rajendra I had in their courts Isana Siva Pandita and Sarva Siva Pandita, Brahmanas of the Saivasiddhanta sect from the north, as their respective preceptors (*rājagurus*/*svāmidēvar*) (see Figure 4.6).

However, the *rājagurus* of the early Chola kings seem to have been Pasupata Brahmanas, who are believed to have encouraged the construction of sepulchral temples. As stated earlier, sepulchral temples may have derived from the earlier hero-stone tradition. In the Pasupata sect, when a *guru* died, his body was buried, and his disciples built over his remains a *linga* named after him, and sometimes a temple was built to enshrine the *linga*. However, the Saivasiddhanta Brahmanas had a different practice, which seems to have enabled Rajaraja and Rajendra to build the aforesaid state temples, different from sepulchral temples, though their *rājagurus* must have been reluctant to admit the deification of the living king, which might have been implied by naming the *linga* after the living king as Rajarajesvara or Rajendracholesvara (Ogura 1999).[33]

An inscription of Thanjavur temple (*SII*, ii, 66) records that Rajaraja assigned 400 women to the Rajarajesvara temple most probably for service through dance for the deity.[34] There are

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[33] In the Thanjavur temple, there is a mural depicting Rajaraja and his queens as pious devotees worshipping Nataraja.

[34] Though their service was not specified, it seems to have been 'dancing' judging from some of their names and the mention of the dancing master along with them in the inscription.

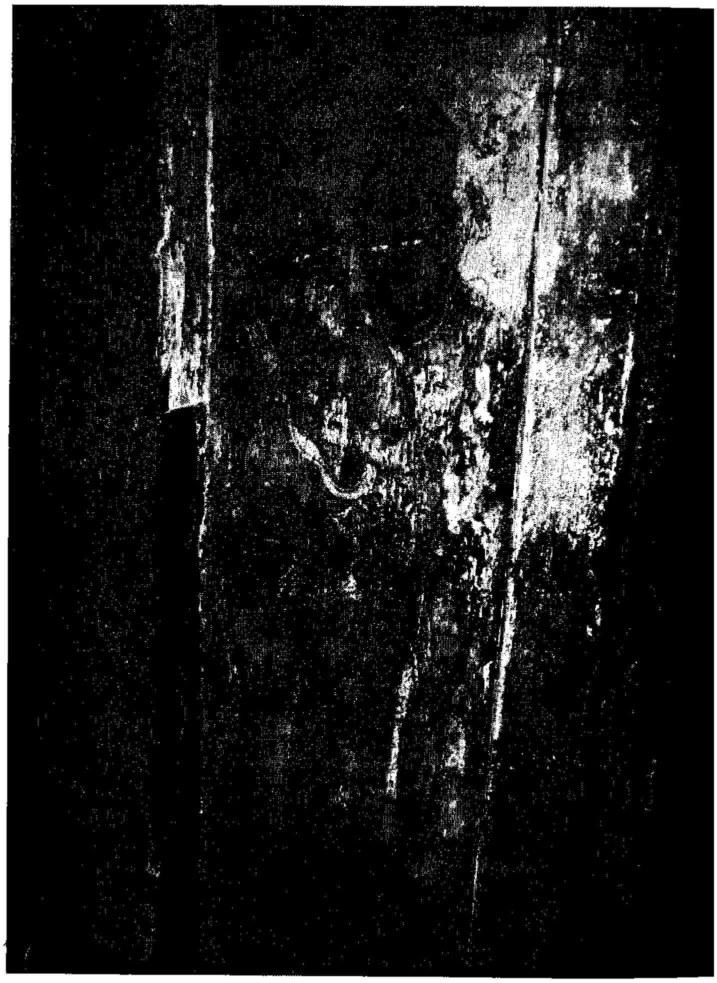

Figure 4.6 Rajaraja with His *Guru,* Brihadisvara Temple Mural
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

many inscriptions of this period referring to temple women including dancing girls (*kūttis*). Aloka Parasher-Sen, who studied inscriptions in northern Karnataka from the eighth to thirteenth centuries from the angle of women's property rights, argues that temple women (designated as *sūḷe* and others) appearing in those inscriptions were prostitutes placed outside the patriarchal family system as 'courtesans of god' (Parasher-Sen 1993: 240–77). According to Leslie Orr, however, the temple women (*dēvaraḍiyār* and others) in the Tamil country during the Chola period were different from the *dēvadāsis* of later periods, particularly those of the colonial period, as they were not defined by membership in a particular community, by professional skill, or by ritual function (Orr 2000: 161–4). Many women, including royal ladies and temple women of this period, were recorded in inscriptions as the donors of gifts such as land, jewels, and so on, to temples. The Thanjavur temple inscriptions include records of donations made to the temple by many members of the military (*niyāyam*) also.[35]

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[35] These military members were assigned to the image of some deities in the temple for management of their ceremonies and protection of the image by king's order. The inscriptions are *SII*, ii, 9, 11, 19, and 54.

In and after the tenth century, there was an influx of Brahmana ascetics to the Chola country from the north. In the initial stage many of them seem to have been ascetics of the Pasupata, Kapalika, or Kalamukha sects, and later ones of the Saivasiddhanta sect. They established monasteries called *maṭha* (originally meaning a hut) or *guhai* (cave), where a teacher and his disciples lived together practising meditation. This institution later spread over the country, being attached to temples in many cases, and it became a place where ascetics and devotees were fed and where ascetics conducted worship and learning. Many *maṭhas* became pilgrimage centres and they played an important role in popularizing the new religious thought of some of these learned ascetics (Karashima et al. 2011).

Sankara, the renowned founder of the Vedanta *advaita* philosophy, was born in Kerala in the eighth or ninth century and is said to have travelled widely in both the southern and northern parts of India and established *maṭhas* in four places, including Sringeri in Karnataka. However, epigraphical reference to the Sringeri *maṭha* begins only in the fourteenth century (Kulke 1985) and no *maṭha* was associated with him in the Chola inscriptions. For Sankara, reality was only the impersonal World Soul of the Upanishads, and therefore he distanced himself from the *bhakti* movement. His discourse seems to have become popular later during the Vijayanagar period, when orthodox Saiva Brahmanas were threatened by the increasing power of the Tamil Saivasiddhantism of the non-Brahmanas and also by the patronage of Vaishnavism by Vijayanagar kings.

The Chola kings of the later period, however, starting from Kulottunga I who enlarged the Nataraja temple in Chidambaram (Younger 1995: 100), seem to have changed their religious orientation and policy. Though they continued to construct temples named after themselves, following the precedent set by Rajaraja I, they were more inclined to worship Siva in the context of universal Saivism. This explains the reason for further embellishment of the Chidambaram temple by Vikramachola, the successor of Kulottunga I, and his making Nataraja almost the tutelary deity of the dynasty. The same reason may be applicable to the change in the thirteenth century of the temple names, Rajarajesvara and Rajendracholesvara to Brihadisvara. The Tribhuvanaviresvara temple, built by Kulottunga III, was consecrated by his *purōhita*, Isvara Siva, the famous Saivasiddhanta teacher.

The Saivasiddhanta sect stressed the *parārthapūja*, that is, worship for the benefit of others, as opposed to the Pasupata sect, which emphasized *ātmārthapūja*, or worship for oneself. Therefore, the Saivasiddhanta sect systematized *bhakti* worship in the process of establishment of its theory and practice for the salvation of the common people. Some inscriptions in the middle period and later mention the recitation of *Tiruppatiyam* (*Dēvaram* hymns) in *maṭhas*, although their recitation in temples started in the later Pallava period. In the twelfth century, as stated earlier, Sekkilar composed the *Periyapurāṇam*, a hagiology of the Nayanars, and completed the compilation of the *Tirumuṟai*, assembling within it various Saivite *bhakti* hymns and the hagiology.

Vaishnavism was also favoured by the Chola kings, though not to the extent that Saivism was. Some of the later kings extended their patronage particularly to the Ranganatha temple in Srirangam (see Figure 4.7). Ramanuja, who succeeded Yamunacharya in the eleventh or twelfth century is believed to have been in charge of the temple and he gave much importance to *bhakti-yōga* as a means of salvation, although he acknowledged Sankara's doctrine

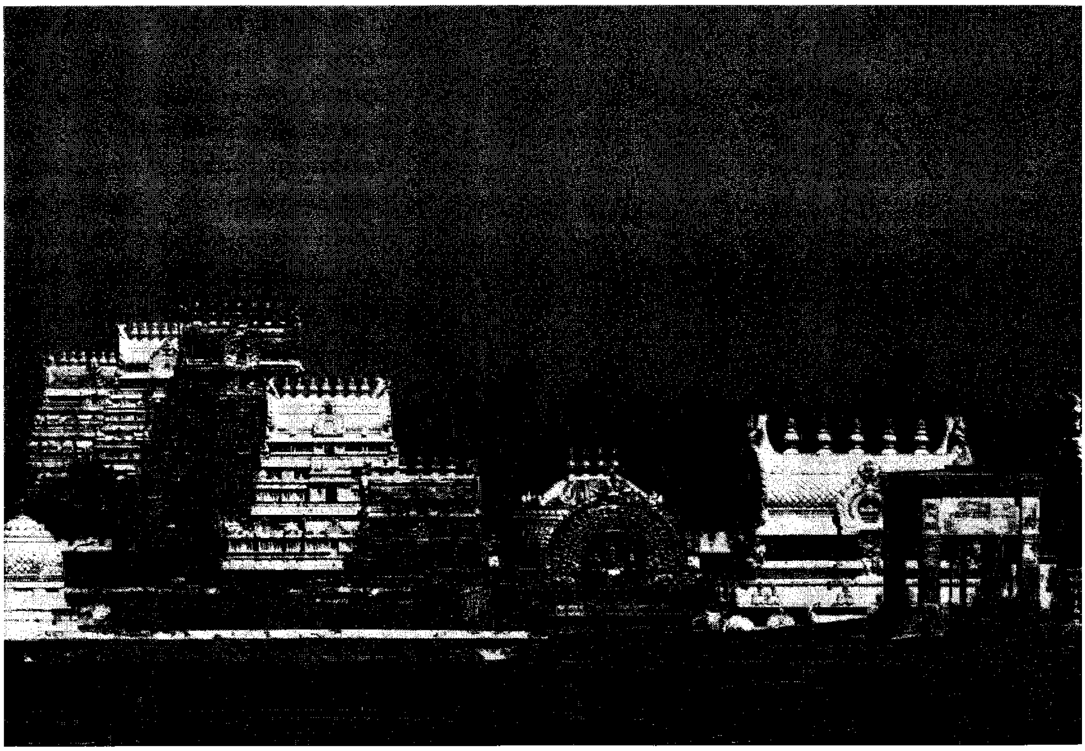

Figure 4.7 *Gōpurams* of Ranganatha Temple in Srirangam
Source: Courtesy of Takeo Kamiya.

of salvation through knowledge (*jñāna-yōga*). He established the creed of Sri Vaishnavism by placing popular *bhakti* worship within the frame of orthodox Vedanta philosophy, thus harmonizing the Tamil and Brahmanical religious traditions (Hart 1975: 132). Ramanuja was eager to spread *bhakti-yōga* among the lower castes, though it is not certain whether or not he preached the doctrine of complete surrender (*prapatti*) to the Supreme Being. His system was called 'qualified monism' (*viśishṭādvaita*). In the fifteenth century, Ramananda of the Sri Vaishnava sect took his thought to the north and promoted the spread of Rama-*bhakti* there. Krishna-*bhakti*, started by Chaitanya in Bengal in the sixteenth century, also soon spread over north India.

Ramanuja was probably expelled fro Srirangam by a Chola king[36] and withdre to Melkote in southern Karnataka for som time. Vaishnavism, however, continued t flourish in the Tamil country, though the S Vaishnava sect was divided into two sub-sec called 'Vadagalai' (the northern school) an 'Tengalai' (the southern school). The form required the believer to make some effo towards salvation, but the latter necessitate no such thing on the part of the believer. Va agalai used Sanskrit as the language of its tex

[36] According to Nilakanta Sastri, Kulottunga expelled Ramanuja from the Srirangam temple (Sast 1963: 90).

and preaching, but Tengalai opted for Tamil, giving more importance to the southern tradition.

We shall discuss the establishment of Tamil Saivasiddhantism by Meykandar and others in section 5.3, as it was related to social changes that occurred in south India during the thirteenth century. Likewise, Virasaivism in the twelfth-century Karnataka will also be described in section 5.3.

4.7 LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

HIROSHI YAMASHITA

4.7.1 Development of Local Languages and the Dawn of Kannada and Telugu Literature

The emergence of distinct local languages and literature almost concurrently in many parts of India, irrespective of north or south, characterizes this period, among other things. In north India, where the Indo-Aryan languages were predominantly in use, the Prakrit languages, otherwise termed Middle Indic or Middle Indo-Aryan, gradually evolved through the transitional stage of Apabhramsa into a wide variety of modern Indo-Aryan languages, the predecessors of the tongues being used in contemporary north India such as Hindi–Urdu (or Hindustani), Bengali, Oriya, Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi, and so on. In this context, an epic titled *Prithvirājaraso*, composed in classical Hindi describing the romance and heroic exploits of Prithviraja III, a king of the Chahamanas in the twelfth century, is a literary representative of this new development of languages in the north. This kind of evolution in languages and literature, however, did not take place in the northern part of India alone. In south India also, in step with the evolution of Dravidian languages around the turn of the millennium, literary activities began in major languages with the single exception of Tamil, which had already established its own literary identity before the Common Era.

Among the Dravidian group of languages, Kannada has the second-oldest literature, next to Tamil. *Kavirājamārga*, a ninth-century Jaina treatise on grammar and poetics, is identified as the earliest extant work in this language. As Jainism remained fairly influential in the Karnataka region for quite a long time, Jainas almost exclusively composed Kannada literature until the twelfth century when a Hindu sect of Virasaivism began to prevail. Pampa (tenth century), a great writer and himself a Jaina, composed *Ādipurāṇa* narrating the life of Rishabha, the founder of Jainism and the first of the 24 Tirthankaras. *Vikramārjunavijaya*, another work by the same author, is a Kannada version of Vyasa'sgreat epic, the *Mahābhārata*. This work is otherwise called *Pampa-bhārata* after the author. Pampa's Kannada version of the epic, which contained settings and characterizations that were different from those in the Sanskrit original, gained widespread popularity in Karnataka. This epic adaptation, along with the *Kavirājamārga* mentioned earlier and other works by early writers, heralded the dawn of classical Kannada literature.

Virasaivism or Lingayatism, an anti-authoritarian worldview and movement advocating socio-religious reformation on the basis of an egalitarian ideology against Brahmana domination, flourished in Karnataka from the twelfth century onward, overpowering the long-established dominance of Jainism in that region (Ramanujan 1973: 22–37) (see section 6.3). A series of Virasaiva poets, both male and female, in the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries wrote impressive prose poems termed *vacanas* (literally, 'saying' or 'speaking') and therefore were called *vacanakāras* (composers of *vacana*) (Ramaswamy 1996). They knew of the 63 *nāyanārs* in the Tamil country and paid homage to them. According to Zvelebil, there were approximately 450 *vacanakāras* and more and more *vacanas* are coming to light even now with the discovery of new manuscripts (Zvelebil 1984: 1). The foremost of the *vacanakāras* was Basava (1106–67), who is traditionally believed to be the minister of the Kalachuri kingdom in the Deccan.[37] The *vacanas*, an eloquent expression of pure faith in Siva, still enjoy deep-rooted popularity in Karnataka.

In Andhra, local literary activities virtually began with the Telugu version of the *Mahābhārata* by Nannaya (eleventh century), whereas stone inscriptions in old Telugu appeared even earlier during the fifth or sixth century. Nannaya's version, which shows his literary skill, is a free translation of two and half chapters (*parvans*) of the great Sanskrit epic. He is honoured as *ādikavi* ('the first poet') for his establishment of Telugu as amedium of literary production. Thereafter, Telugu developed its own literature under the influence of the Virasaivism that then held sway in neighbouring Karnataka. Nannaya's translation of the *Mahābhārata* into Telugu was subsequently taken up after an interval by Tikkana (thirteenth century), a great Brahmana poet, though he could not complete it. The translation of the remaining parts of the epic was finally taken over by another great Brahmana poet, Errana (fourteenth century). Sometime after these attempts at translating the *Mahābhārata* into Telugu, other versions of tl *Rāmāyaṇa* were also translated into Telugu by couple of poets.

Next, we shall see the birth of the Malayala language which, in origin, was no more than Tamil dialect spoken in a narrow area stretchir out between the Malabar Coast and the Wester Ghats in the southernmost part of the India peninsula. This territory, roughly correspon ing to the present-day state of Kerala, primaril belonged to *Tamiḻakam* as a single cultural ar where Tamil was used. Malayalam, as a distin language, very likely split from Middle Tam in the ninth century or a little later (see th last section of the Prologue), being incessantl exposed to influences, particularly from Sanskrit, on its vocabulary, alphabet, and phonetic The migration of Nambudiri Brahmanas contributed to this development a great deal. Th oldest available texts in Malayalam presumabl appeared sometime between the twelfth and th thirteenth centuries. *Rāmacharitam* (a metrica work based on the Yuddhakanda in *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Bhāshā Kauṭilīya* (a commentary in pros on Kautiliya's *Arthaśāstra*) represent the earlies stratum of the literary corpus in Malayalam Soon after the advent of early Malayalan literature, however, the *maṇipravāḷam* style[3] of composition characterized by a hybrid o Malayalam and Sanskrit, both in vocabular and grammatical structure, became dominan and enjoyed popularity for a long time in succeeding periods.

It must be remembered that literary activities in Sanskrit were by no means insignifican in this region, as is hinted by the emergence and popularity of the *maṇipravāḷam* style in Tamil and Malayalam literature. Drama, stories, romances, poetry, criticism and many other forms of Sanskrit literature were widely composed—sometimes independently and sometimes under the patronage of royal families. Kerala, in particular, which had occupied a leading position in Sanskrit learning and promotion from the beginning, produced Sanskrit works belonging to various genres.

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[37] Apart from Basava, Akka Mahadevi, Allama Prabhu, Chennabasava, Siddharama, and Devara Dasimayya are among the most well-known *vacanakaras* (Ishwaran 1992: 72–3).

[38] In Tamil literature as well, the *maṇipravāḷam* in this case the admixture of Tamil and Sanskrit became more and more popular in the age of the Cholas. Though there were no great literary works in a true sense, most of the prose commentaries of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries on the Vaishnava Bhakti poems are in the *maṇipravāḷam* style.

In the sphere of religious literature, Tamil Nadu was quite prolific, yielding a series of authoritative commentaries, devotional poems, treatises and tracts by various authors of orthodox schools of Indian philosophy. The works of Ramanuja (1017–37), including the *Śrībhāshya*, a celebrated commentary on the *Brahmasūtra*, are particularly noteworthy not solely for their contribution to establishing a theistic Vedanta system called *viśishṭādvaita* but also in exerting a great influence on the subsequent development of Tamil Saivite theology as well.

As for Vaisnavism in south India, the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* deserves special mention. The origin of this medium-sized Sanskrit *Purāṇa* had been a point of much debate among various authors despite the absence of definite proof. Intensive study done by H. Hardy (1983: 484–552) employing a comparative method between the *Kṛṣṇa-carita* of this important scripture and the devotional songs of Alvar has given a clear picture of the southern origin of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*. Numerous other details cited by him point to the same conclusion. According to Hardy, the ninth or earlier tenth century appears as the most plausible date for this work.

4.7.2 Development of Tamil Literature and the Emergence of New Trends

Brahmanical religion entered a new phase in the sixth and seventh centuries in Tamil Nadu with the emergence of the *bhakti* cult and its dominant aspects of intense emotionalism, in contrast to early northern forerunners of *bhakti* as presented in the *Bhagavadgīta*. The sectarian polarization into mutually exclusive groups of Saivas and Vaisnavas, which had not yet been so conspicuous in the pre-devotional Tamil texts such as the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai* and the *Paripāṭal*, also came to the fore in the same period.[39] Emotional *bhakti* had its own literary expression for the first time in the works of early Tamil poet-saints known collectively as the *nāyanār*s (or *nāyanmār*s) and the *āḻvār*s, corresponding to the Saiva and Vaisnava folds respectively. Providing a continuous impetus to different linguistic areas, this tangible development in devotional religion that had sprouted in the Tamil country went hand-in-hand with the rise of religious literature in different vernaculars across the Indian subcontinent, as stated in section 3.5. Thus, the *bhakti* movement consequently engulfed the entire Indian subcontinent.

The *Periyapurāṇam* ('The Great Purana'), or *Tiruttoṇṭarpurāṇam* ('The Purana of Holy Devotees') in its regular title, is a Saiva hagiography composed by Sekkilar (twelfth century), a Vellala from Tondaimandalam (Sastri 1955: 379) and a minister of the Cholaking Anapayan identified by scholars with Kulottunga II (1133–50). The *Periyapurāṇam*, which depicts the legendary lives and miracles of the 63 *nāyanārs*, provides rich information on religion and society from the early *bhakti* period to the age of compilation. This canonical masterpiece is admirable and presents fascinatingly diverse forms of devotion to Siva, covering veneration of the *linga*, self-sacrificing dedication to the Lord in the guise of mendicant monks, self-injurious actions as a manifestation of intensive *bhakti*,[40] an immense variety of religious observances, ritual worship centring on idols and temples, and the genuine adoration of the formless, abstract godhead.

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[39] The Saivas and Vaisnavas subsequently became bitterly rivalrous when the once-flourishing Jainism and Buddhism were gradually on the decline (Jesudasan and Jesudasan 1961: 75–6). The polarization into Saivites and Vaisnavites and their mutual antagonism become quite explicit from the sixth or seventh century onwards (Subrahmanian 1980: 377; Hardy 1983: 203).

In order to find a clue to the background and historical significance of this unprecedented work, the special esteem gained by Sundaramurti (or Sundarar for short), the last of the three hymnists of *Dēvaram*, deserves greater attention. Sundaramurti's *Dēvaram* (Sundarar II.39) contains a short piece entitled *Tiruttoṇṭarttokai*, in which 62 *nāyanār*s, including his parents but with the exception of Sundaramurti himself, are enumerated in regular sequence as in the *Periyapurāṇam*, which was written a few centuries later. The *Tiruttontartiruvantati* by Nampi Antar Nampi, which was composed in the late eleventh century, immediately before the *Periyapurāṇam*, presented a hagiological list of 63 *nāyanārs* with Sundaramurti added to it. From the above facts, it can readily be assumed that Sundaramurti himself was deeply involved, or at least given an emblematic role, in the process of compiling and canonizing the lore of these Tamil saints.

In the narrative of the *Periyapurāṇam*, Sundaramurti, who is portrayed explicitly as a 'Saiva-antaṇar' (*PP* 1.153) meaning Sivabrahmana, is accorded a prominent position in the structural framework for this hagiological collection by setting the legendary tales of his holy pilgrimage and his final ascent to Mount Kailasa respectively at the beginning and at the end of the entire volume (Zvelebil 1973: 187, 191; Varadarajan 1988: 157; McGlashan 2006: 9). In addition, single verses eulogizing Sund ramurti are appended at the close of each cha ter (McGlashan 2006: 9). If Sundaramurti as 'Saiva-antanar' was none other than an Atisai Brahmana, as identified by Petersonn (Peterso 1989: 302), 'Saiva-antanars' are unmistakab the ancestors of a particular group of heredita priests variously called Atisaivas, Sivacharyas, Gurukkals, serving Saiva deities and goddess in present-day Tamil temples. In a coup of places in this hagiographical collection, chapter or a portion (*PP*, IV.6, XI) is abrupt inserted, even disturbing natural context, pay tribute to Saiva-antanars, their ardent dev tion, and their expertise in the *Saivāgamas*. A these are suggestive of a close link of the fin editor/editors of this hagiographical epic wi the emerging priestly class attached to agam Saiva temples[41] as one of the driving forces the rise and flourishing of the Hindu devotion movement in medieval Tamil Nadu.

After the turn of the millennium, adapt tions of the *Mahābhārata* were composed o after another in the major Dravidian language Parallel attempts were made in the case the *Rāmāyaṇa* as well. Most notable amon southern versions of *Rāmāyaṇa* is *Rāmāvatāra* ('Rama-Incarnation'), commonly known *Kamparāmāyaṇam*, written by the Tamil po Kampan (Kampar) of the twelfth century. Th work is, in contrast to Valmiki's Sanskrit ve sion, filled with violence, bloodshed, and oth excesses in connection with the worship of Go (Hart 1975: 72). This reminds us of the graphi description of gruesome episodes in the liv of the saints who were extraordinarily devo as described in the *Periyapurāṇam*, which wa composed a little before the *Rāmāvatāra* in the same century. In addition, though the overall framework and narrative outlines follow its Sanskrit counterpart, the *Rāmāvatāram* does not simply imitate the original. Kampan's *Rāmāyaṇa* presents a somewhat marked contrast to Valmiki's, in its style, tone, figures, techniques, poetic imagery, or narrative details. Some of the differences exhibited in Kampan's work owe a great deal to his own genius or originality, whereas others are derived from ancient Tamil literary conventions (Varadarajan 1988: 166–74; Hart 1975: 72, 196, 280; Hart and Heifetz: 1988: 6–7).Being a synthetic amalgamation of elements from varied sources of inspiration, the *Rāmāvatāram* is properly appreciated as the culmination of medieval Tamil literature, as George Hart commented (Hart 1975: 280).

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[40] For these stories, see section 3.5.

[41] The Brahmanas who comprised this new priest class were different from those engaged in Vedic studi living in *brahmadeya* villages (*chaturvedi-mangalams*).

This Vaisnava work maintained such overwhelming and enduring popularity among Tamil folk that no Tamil author after Kampan made an attempt to adapt the *Rāmāyaṇa*, whereas different authors repeatedly adapted the *Mahābhārata*. Not only that, the *Rāmāvatāram* exerted an influence even upon later attempts to adapt the *Mahābhārata*. Villipputturar of the fourteenth century, for example, drew much inspiration from *Rāmāvatāram* in composing his Tamil version of the *Mahābhārata* (Hart 1975: 280), known popularly as *Villi-pāratam* after his name.[42]

Apart from adaptors of the epics, two other poets in the Chola period, though not as renowned as Kampan, deserve special mention. They are Jayankontar (Ceyankontar) and Ottakkuttan (or Kuttan for short), both court poets belonging to the twelfth century. The former is famed for his *Kalingattupparaṇi*,[43] a masterpiece eulogizing the victory of Kulottunga II in his invasions of the Kalinga territories. The latter is highly appreciated for his unparalleled talent in composing in multiple genres of poetry, particularly the three *ulā* poems in praise of three successive kings (Sastri 1955: 376–7; Varadarajan 1988: 160–2).

It was from the twelfth century onward that notable prose writers appeared on the Tamil literary landscape, which had been dominated by the verse tradition over a long period of time. They were commentators (called *uraiyāciriyar*) on early Tamil texts and scriptures, including secular ones. One of their celebrated precursors was Ilampuranar (c. twelfth century) who annotated the *Tolkāppiyam*, the most authentic book on classical Tamil grammar and poetics. He was followed by a few recognized commentators in succession: Peraciriyar (c. thirteenth century) composing the commentaries on the *Tolkāppiyam*, the *Tirukkāvaiyār*, and the *Kuṟuntokai*, Parimelalakar (c. fourteenth century) expounding the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* and the *Paripāṭal*, and Naccinarkkiniyar (c. 1400 CE) elucidating the *Tolkāppiyam*, the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*, and several Sangam anthologies (Varadarajan 1988: 188–91).

Though they attract scant attention in the orthodox history of Tamil religion and literature, the contribution of the *sittar*s, a category of poet-saints, should not be neglected. The *sittar*s were basically Saivites and their tradition can be traced back even to the mysticism of Tirumular (sixth or seventh century), the author of the *Tirumantiram*. Their endeavours, occurring side-by-side with the *bhakti* movement, have sometimes been described as the *sittar* movement. The *sittar*s advocated genuine devotion without discrimination on the grounds of birth and opposed idolatry and temple-oriented ritualism as obstacles in the pathway to God. They maintained a critical attitude towards the established Brahmanical order and religious organizations like temples and *maṭha*s. In their literary compositions, the *sittar*s gave poetic form to their own realization realization of truth in a lucid style of versification employing folk ballad conventions. They were inclined to represent the divine as something dwelling within each one's self. The immanence of divinity is illustrated in the poems composed by Sivavakkiyar, one of the foremost *sittar*s in the early medieval period, most probably in the ninth century. In the bulk of poetic works written by the *sittar*s, including those by Sivavakkiyar, the Absolute, which ought to be omnipresent and pervasive theoretically, was preferably assumed to be immanent and radiant from within (Yamashita 2011: 275–6). Pattinattar constituted the triad in Tamil *sittar* literature along with Tirumular and Sivavakkiyar. It is probable, however, that there were at least two Pattinattars known in the Tamil *sittar* tradition. One was a great Saiva poet-saint of the tenth or eleventh century who was one of the 63 *nāyanār*s. The other was the author of the *Paṭṭinattār-pāṭal*, who lived in the fourteenth–fifteenth centuries in the Vijayanagar period (Zvelebil 1973: 232–5). The genealogy of influential poet-saints in later ages such as Tayumanavar (1706–44)[44] and Ramalingar (1823–74) can be traced to the *sittar*s in a broad sense. Both of them, the latter in particular, influenced, although remotely, the early phase of the Dravidian movement in modern Tam Nadu.

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[42] Likewise, the *Kandapuranam*, a Saiva epic of the seventeenth century on Lord Murugan, closely follows Kampan's model in its poetic composition (Sastri 1955: 387).

[43] *Parani* is a minor literary genre in Tamil literature that celebrates the heroism of a victorious king who won a great battle. The *Kalingattupparani* contains gruesome details of the battlefield and horrific descriptions of a Kali temple and its rites (Jesudasan and Jesudasan 1961: 186–8; Varadarajan 1988: 139–41).

Before concluding this section, mentio must be made retrospectively of the contribution of non-orthodox circles to the developmen of medieval Hindu literature in Tamil. Althoug both Jainism and Buddhism were on the declin and had only a limited influence, the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*, a voluminous Jaina epic on King Civakan's life by Tiruttakkatevar, is worthy o special attention in terms of the impact on late Tamil verse. This work, which was supposedly composed in the early part of the tenth century (Sastri 1955: 375), was actually a trendsetter in the art of versification in the sense that it popularized a new form of poetry called *viruttam* which successfully replaced the *akaval* and *veṇpa* metres commonly employed in former periods The aforementioned epic works appearing in subsequent periods such as the *Periyapurāṇam* *Rāmāvatāram*, and *Villipāratam* were all composed in *viruttam*. This metrical form, which emerged from folk tradition and therefore was more flexible and had fewer restrictions than, for example, the once-dominant *akaval* metre, had maintained its popularity till the seventeenth century when other folk forms were adopted and gained literary stature (Varadarajan 1988: 22–3, 151–2). The popularization of this particular metre constitutes a valuable contribution of this Jaina epic to Tamil literature from the Chola period onward.

Literary activities under the Cholas were quite prolific, with religious works that were magnificent in scale and spectacle, and took Tamil literature to new heights. The renowned literary historians, Jesudasan and Hephzibah Jesudasan, have convincingly named this period 'the Age of Epics' (Jesudaṣan and Jesudasan 1961: 131).

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[44] Tayumanavar's date is a matter of dispute. A majority of scholars ascribe him to the eighteenth century (Yamashita 2011: 286n). Here we tentatively follow Zvelebil's conjecture (Zvelebil 1973: 239).

4.8 TEMPLES AND SCULPTURE

R. MAHALAKSHMI

4.8.1 The Tamil Region

The institutionalization of the *bhakti* tradition is best represented in the monuments of the Chola period, although temple building activity in the Tamil region is well known during the rule of the Pallavas and Pandyas (see section 3.4).

The early Cholas built and renovated many temples at the sacred sites of the *bhakti* tradition, introducing some innovations in plan and elevation. These were essentially simple *vimānas*, with an *ardhamaṇḍapa*, in some cases an *aṣṭaparivārālaya* or 'eight family shrines', in a few instances, the *snāpanamaṇḍapa*, an entranceway or *gopura* at the principal entrance, and a *prākāra* or enclosure (Dhaky 1983: 150) (see Figure 4.8). From the time of the middle Cholas, not only did temple construction receive greater attention and patronage, new temple sites that were not part of the *bhakti* hymnists' sacred landscape were also created, such as the grand temples at Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram. Because of the scale and magnificence of these shrines, with the

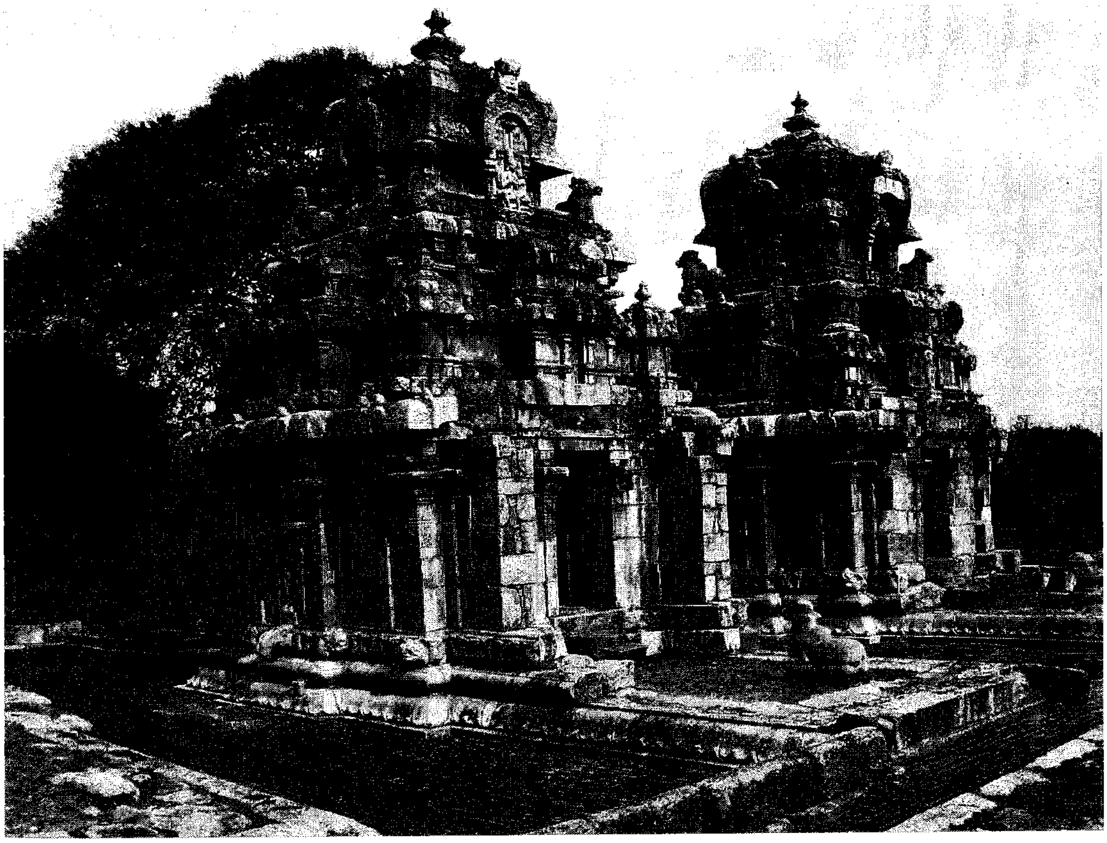

Figure 4.8 Muvarkovil at Kodumbalur
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

central *vimāna* towering majestically over the entire landscape, surrounded by minor *parivāra* and other shrines, these were often designated cathedral temples (Srinivasan 1972: 85).

From the later Chola period, there was a horizontal expression of the temple reflecting new patronage structures, as seen in the numerous shrines that became a part of the temple complex, with gateways in the four quarters dominating the architecture (Srinivasan 1972: 85). The temple in the philosophical realm represented 'ideational' space according to the tenets of *Śaivasiddhānta*, with architectural elements such as the *gopuram* (gateway) and *prākāra* (enclosures serving as circumambulatory paths) symbolizing pathways from the external/physical world to the interior/transcendental (Curtis 1983: 87–9). The geography of the temple corresponded to this categorization, where the cult images, chambers, porches, passages, and gateways increased in size, allowing the unmanifest at the centre to permeate and penetrate the embodied manifest structures of the temple.

The early Chola temples essentially had an *ekatala* (single-storeyed) *vimāna* with a *linga* housed in the sanctum sanctorum of the Siva temples. The walls of the *vimāna* and *gopuram* were of stone, punctuated by pilasters, while the *shikharas* reveal brick layering that was possibly a later addition (Dhaky 1983: 152). Niches or *devakoṣṭhas* for Dakshinamurti, Ardhanari/ Vishnu/Lingodbhava, and Brahma were placed on the exterior of the southern, western, and northern *garbhagṛha* walls respectively, providing the devotee with a visual mythological canvas. Dakshinamurti is a uniquely south Indian icon, seen either seated or standing and, in some instances, holding the musical instrument, the *vīṇā*, and discoursing with sages and others. This may be seen as a Brahmanical attempt to counter the influence of the Sramanic teachers who were known to preach and proselytiz The Ardhanari is an interesting icon, denotir the union of Siva/*puruṣa* and Shakti/*prakṛ* with the goddess occupying the left or 'lesse half (Goldberg 2002: 5, 55). The gradual di placement of Vishnu from the main *devakoṣṭ* and the iconization of the Lingodbhavamur where Siva at the centre is seen emerging fro the phallic flame, with Brahma in the for of a swan on top and Vishnu as boar belo asserted the sectarian triumph of Saivism und the patronage of the Cholas. Generally, t external southern and northern walls of t *ardhmaṇḍapa* (literally, 'half' hall) had imag of Ganesa and Durga. The classic image of t goddess was with many arms, holding a *śaṅkh* and *cakra* (Vaisnava symbols) and standing o a buffalo head, representing her slaying of t demon Mahisha (Mahalakshmi 2011: 275).

Some of the typical temples of this perio are the Nagesvarasvamin temple at Kumbakonam, the Tirutantorisvara temple a Tiruchirappalli, and the Pancanadisvara templ at Tiruvaiyaru built during the reign of Adity I, the Brahmapurisvara temple at Pullamangai the Kailasanatha temple at Alambakkam an the Sundaresvarar temple at Palur during th time of Parantaka I. The temples of Naltunai Isvaram at Punjai and Gomuktesvara in Tiruvaduturai reflect a new trend in the *vimān* layout, where the *garbhagṛha* was connected t the *ardhamaṇḍapa* through a narrow passag called *antarāla*, allowing for an increase in th *devakoṣṭhas*, and new icons and mythic moti to be added to the Shaiva corpus. Temples buil by the Chola queen Sembiyan Mahadevi, wif of Gandaraditya, reflect this visual expansion with Nataraja, Kalantaka, Bhiksatana, and Gangadhara finding place on the *vimāna* walls.

The idea of the sepulchral temple was well known in the region, as can be seen from the construction of the Kodandaramesvara temple in Tondaimanadu, near Sri Kalahasti in modern Andhra Pradesh, in honour of Aditya I. The Rajarajesvara temple transformed this idea by underscoring the correspondence between kingship and divine authority, where the temple and main deity were named after a living king, Rajaraja I. The temple was conceived of as Dakshina Meru, a mythical allusion to the axis of the universe (Champakalakshmi 1996: 426). The vast enterprise of construction was undertaken between 1003 and 1010 CE, at a time when Rajaraja Chola's imperialist expansion and integration were at their peak. This is reflected in the massive proportions of the structure—an outer courtyard, inner courtyard, the large square base of the *garbhagṛha*, the high *vimāna* wall, and the *shikhara* towering 200 feet above the ground. The entry to the temple is from the east through two gateways, and the main shrine can be entered by flights of stairs on the northern and southern side leading up to the platform across the *ardhamaṇḍapa*. In front lay the *mukhamaṇḍapa* and the *mahāmaṇḍapa*, covered on the sides and lined with pillars. Later, the pillars and roof over the front porch were added, along with a flight of stairs from the front. The *liṅga* in the sanctum is a massive column 28.5 feet high.

Given the vast wall face of the shrine, it is split into two parts allowing for the creation of a two-storeyed edifice, with provision for four *devakoṣṭhas* on each side and doorways separating the walls into two halves. The lower niches had Bhiksatanar, Virabhadra, Kalari, and Nataraja on the southern wall; Harihara, Lingodbhava, Candrasekhara, and another Candrasekhara on the western wall; and Ardhanari, Gangadhara, Uma-*aliṅgana*, and Candrasekhara on the northern wall. The second *tala* repeats the image of Pinakin Tripurantaka in different poses, serving yet again as a powerful symbol of kingship (Champakalakshmi 1996: 429). There is an *antarabhitti* (inner wall) providing an ambulatory passage around the sanctum, creating a *sāndhāra-prāsāda* or a double-walled *vimāna*. On the outside of the inner wall in the *āditala*, there are huge *devakoshṭhas* in the centre bearing images of a seated Siva on the south, Nataraja (in the *catura* pose) on the west, and Mahadevi on the north. The passageway is filled with frescoes of the Chola period, overlaid by those of the Nayaka period, depicting Dakshinamurti on the west, Nataraja dancing in the golden hall at Tillai with Rajaraja I and his queens as rapt spectators, and Siva as Tripurantaka on the north. On the second *tala*, Siva himself, the lord of dancers, depicts 80 of the 108 dance *karaṇas* from the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. The separate *mahāmaṇḍapa* and the huge Nandi facing the main shrine are the other conspicuous elements of the temple. The 55 inscriptions of Rajaraja I provide details of the elaborate arrangements made by the king for the provision and maintenance of services in the temple. We are told of 67 lamps being lit every day, of at least 145 watchmen being on the payroll of the temple, about 369 places giving or receiving resources to it within Cholamandalam, and numerous dancing girls provided with shares from land for their services (Heitzman 1997: 121–6). The performance of the *Rājarājanāṭakam* (not staged now) at this site, presumably a play recounting the construction of the temple and Saiva legends, is also known (Sastri 1955a: 663).

The Rajendracholisvara temple at Gangaikondacholapuram in many ways resembles the Thanjavur temple (see Figure 4.9). What is intriguing is that a part of the gifts made by Rajaraja I to the Rajarajesvaram temple were transferred by his son Rajendra I within 25 years to the Rajendracholisvaram (Dhaky 1983: 241; Karashima 1984: 95). The Siva Devale No. 2 in Polonaruva, Sri Lanka, can be dated to the reign

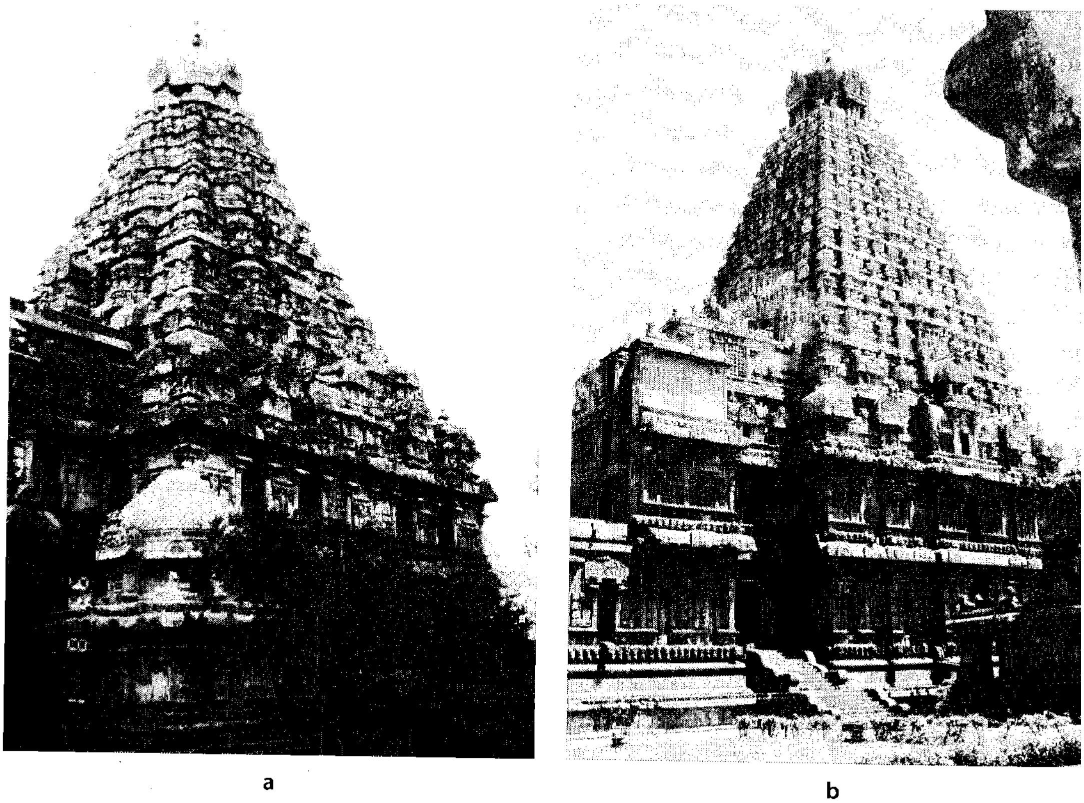

Figure 4.9 (a) *Vimāna* of Gangaikondacholapuram Temple and (b) *Vimāna* of Thanjavur Temple
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

of Rajendra I, and is a simple *ekatalavimāna* (Seneviratna 1998: 153). Among the later Chola temples, the most spectacular is the Airavatesvaram temple in Darasuram (Figure 4.10) built by Rajaraja II (the place name is a corruption of the original name of the temple—Rajarajesvaram/Rarasuram). Its unique features are the *mukhamaṇḍapa* resembling a chariot on wheels, the elaborate sculptural detail on the *vimāna*, and the 48 labelled panels depicting the lifestories of the 63 Saiva *nāyanārs*, as well as depictions from a contemporary literary work, *Takkayākapparaṇi* (Nagaswamy 1978: 134–45). Kulottunga III built the Kambahareshvara temple at Tribhuvanam in the early thirteenth century. It has the same wheeled porch-*maṇḍapa* and exquisit sculptural plethora as Darasuram (Srinivasa 1972: 132–3).

The Siva temples between the eleventh an thirteenth centuries and even thereafter mad provision for housing the consort referred to b the generic name Amman in special shrines calle the *tirukkāmakkōṭṭam*. This Amman shrine

> was invariably built on the northern side of th *mahāmaṇḍapa* or in the forecourt, facing south, an occasionally, it was built in other places in the templ in the north-west corner of the north court.... Jus as every shrine to Siva was called in the numerou inscriptions Tirumalai (Holy Hill) or Kailasa o Meru or Pommalai after the eternal abodes of Siva

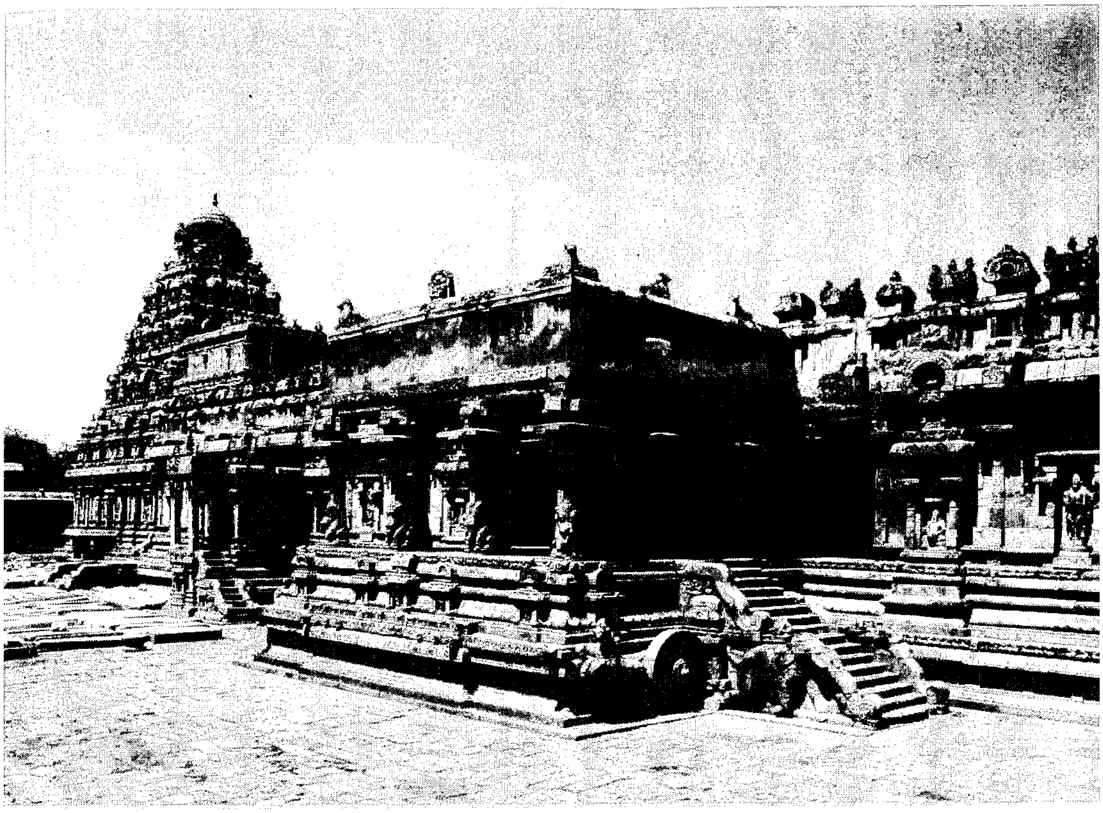

Figure 4.10 Airavatesvara Temple at Darasuram
Source: Courtesy of Takeo Kamiya.

every Devi shrine was called Kamakkottam or Tiru (Sri) Kamakkottam after Kamakoti, which was believed to be the most important shrine or seat of Devi in Kancipuram where she is called Kamakoti or Kamaksi. (Srinivasan 1948: 56)

The temples not only housed the *acala* or immovable *mūrtis*, they had different types of *calamūrtis* made of bronze and gifted for various ritual services and ceremonies. Numerous Nataraja and Amman bronzes of this period have been found at various temple centres, particularly in temples that enjoyed great royal patronage. The expertise of the bronze craftsmen was so greatly appreciated that there are records of one family of bronze casters being shifted by royalty from Thanjavur to Gangaikondacholapuram and finally to Swamimalai (Raj et al. 2000: 2). Bronze casting was referred to as the *madhuchchiṣṭa-vidhānam* or the honey-and-wax method which, in the western world, is referred to as *cire perdue* or the lost wax method.

4.8.2 The Other Regions

The modern Andhra region in the early medieval period saw the classification of holy sites as *triliṅga* and *pañcārāmakṣetra,* allowing for the linking up of sites; the latter referred to those places where the pieces of the *liṅga* worn by Taraka, a great Siva devotee, fell when he was killed by Siva's son Skanda Kumara, and is believed to have been influenced by the

Kalamukha sect of the Saivas (Talbot 2001: 108). The Bhimeshvara temple at Draksharama, the Ksheera Rama Lingeswara Swami Temple at Palakol, the Amareshvara temple at Amaravati, the Someshvara temple at Somarama, the Gunupudi and Kumara Bhimeshvara temples at Bhimarama, Samalkota, form the *ārāma* circuit. The Draksharama temple is famed as one of the 12 *jyotirliṅgas* and also for housing a *saktipīṭha* for the goddess Manikyamba. The main shrine is entered through flights of steps on either side of the *mukhamaṇḍapa*, leading into the *mahāmaṇḍapa*, *antarāla*, and, finally, the *garbhagṛha*. The *liṅga* in the sanctum rises to a height of 6.1 metres from the *vēdi*. It has been argued that the goddess Manikyesvari was the tutelary deity of the feudatories of the eastern Chalukyas, and this is perhaps why she is referred to as Bhimanatha's favourite cour san and not as his wife (Reddy 2009: 77). T Mallikarjuna temple at Srisailam, built arou the ninth century CE, was believed to be link to four other sites that were its 'gateways': T purantakam in the east, Siddhavatam in t south, Alampur in the west and Umamahesh varam in the north. Most of these major te ples, located primarily in the fertile river valle of the Godavari and the Krishna and in t coastal region, were built or renovated by t Chalukyas of Vengi, and in the Kakatiya peri (eleventh–thirteenth centuries) inland shrin that were modest in size came to be built (T bot 2001: 111). Narasimhadeva I of the Gan dynasty built the Varaha Narasimha Svami te ple at Simhachalam during the thirteenth ce tury in the Kalinga style (see Figure 4.11). It h

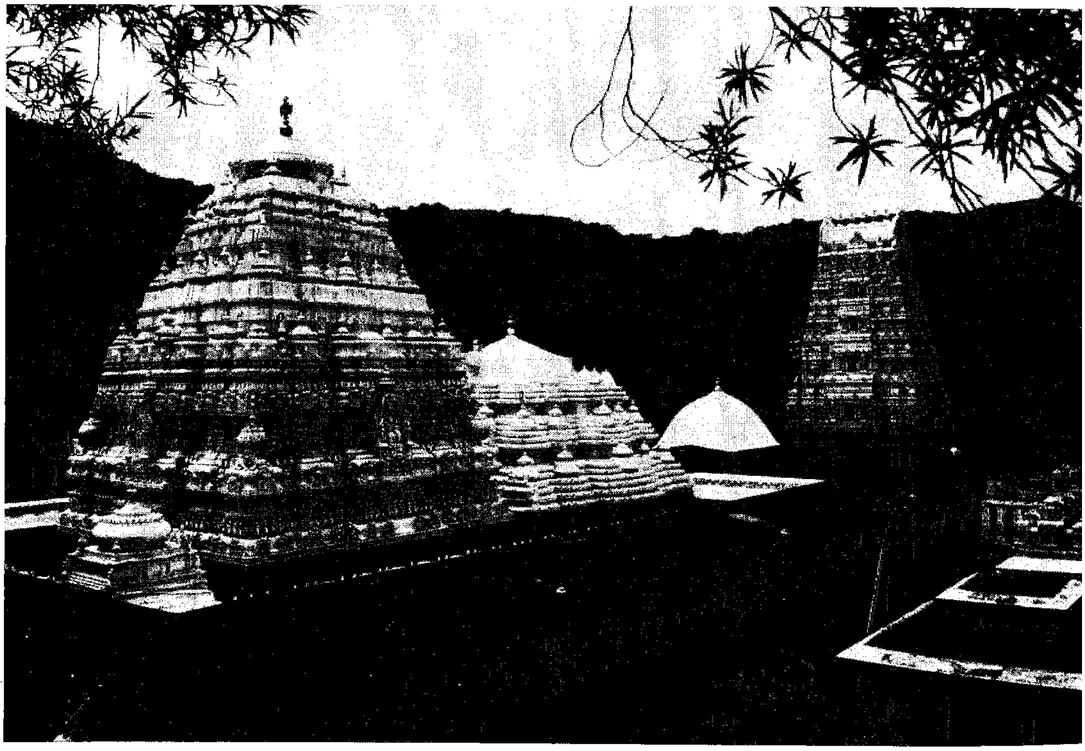

Figure 4.11 Simhachalam Temple
Source: Courtesy of Takeo Kamiya.

a four-storeyed *shikhara*, since renovated with a *mukhamaṇḍapa*, *antarāla*, and *garbhagṛha* and richly decorated with various forms of Vishnu (Reddy 2009: 84). The *trikūṭa* or triple shrine with a common *maṇḍapa* to the west, north, and east of the shrines, dedicated respectively to Siva, Vishnu, and Surya in Hanumakonda (Warangal), was built by Kakati Rudradeva in 1163 CE (Reddy 2009: 133). A *nandimaṇḍapa* is in front of the main shrine, and the ruined *maṇḍapa* with exquisite carvings on 300 pillars has lent it the popular name of the 'thousand-pillared' temple. While the *vimānas* stand bereft of their *shikharas*, what is also interesting about this temple within the fort of Warangal are the free-standing *toraṇas* at the entrance. A general of the Kakatiya king Ganapatideva built the Rudresvara temple, commonly known as the Ramappa temple, in 1213 CE as an *eka-kūṭa* structure with a star-shaped plan (Krishna Kumari 1990: 130). The *adhiṣṭhāna* as well as the walls of the temple above the *upapīṭha* are profusely decorated, and what is interesting is the frequent appearance of *mithuna* and other erotic figures. There are images of a woman lifting her garments and exposing her genitalia, nudity of sages, an ithyphallic monkey attempting to disrobe a woman, oral congress between an ascetic and woman, and so on.

The Jaina monuments at Shravana Belagola in modern Karnataka are splendid examples of Ganga art in the late tenth century, particularly the 56-foot-tall monolithic image of Gommata, the son of the first Tirthankara Adinatha, made of finely polished granite (Sastri 1955a: 473). There is a granite *mālikā* surrounding the image, built in the twelfth century during the time of the Hoysala ruler Vishnuvardhana. The later Chalukya architecture of the western Deccan, in the Karnataka-Dravida style with northern and western influences, using grey soapstone (chloritic schist) can be seen at Lokigundi or Lakkundi (see Figure 4.12), with 17 extant Jaina and Brahmanical temples dated to the eleventh and twelfth centuries CE (Sinha 2000: 101). The Jaina *basti* is the largest, with a five-storeyed *nirandhāra-vimāna* and a closed *navaraṅga-maṇḍapa*. The Kashi Vishveshvara temple belongs to the northern Vesara style and has two shrines (*dvikūṭa*) with a pyramidal roof, dedicated to Siva and Surya, facing east and west respectively, linked by an open porch. The Dodda Basappa temple in Dambal has a stellate plan resting on a 24-point star base, very similar to the Hoysala style, except that here even the *maṇḍapa* rests on a 34-point star base (Huntington 1993: 545). The Mahadeva

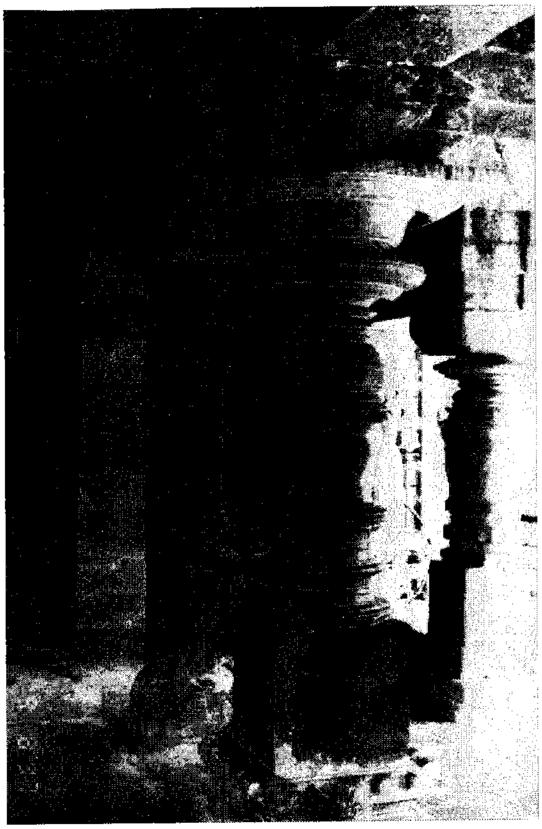

Figure 4.12 Lakkundi Jain Temple
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

temple at Ittagi built by a military officer of Vikramaditya VI in 1112 CE was described in the foundation inscription as *dēvālayacakravarti*—'emperor among temples'. An interesting early twelfth century sculpture from Jalasangavi depicts a woman writing a Sanskrit inscription in the Kannada script.

The Chennakeshava temple at Belur built by the Hoysalas in 1117 CE and the Hoysalesvara temple at Halebid (see Figure 4.13) in the early thirteenth century represent a new phase in south Indian art and architecture, where the intricacy of the design and execution suggests the use of techniques of the ivory worker or goldsmith (Sastri 1956: 476). The former was dedicated to Vishnu in the form of Vijaya-Narayana, with a *vimāna* of the typical stellate plan, an ornate sanctum doorway, ornamental doorway at the *antarāla*, and a large *navaraṅga* (Srinivasan 1972: 140). The latter consists of two Siva shrines raised on a common platform each *vimāna* having an *antarāla* and *navaraṅg* in front towards the east.

The development of the Kerala-Dravid style of temple architecture can be seen fron the eleventh century CE, where the typica but miniature Dravida square/circular/apsida *vimāna* with an independent *grīva* and *shikhara* is surrounded by a circular structure with a slop ing roof (Sarkar 1992: 37). These were mostl *sāndhāra* temples with single or double circum ambulatory paths aroundthe *garbhagṛha*. Th Vadakkunathan temple in Thrissur belonging t the eleventh–twelfth centuries (see Figure 4.14) has two circular and one square *śrīkōvils*, all fac ing west in alignment, dedicated to Siva, Sankar Narayana, and Vishnu respectively (Huntingto 1993: 605). This temple has a *kūttambalam* fo the performance of *kūḍiyāṭṭam*, a regional San skritic art form.

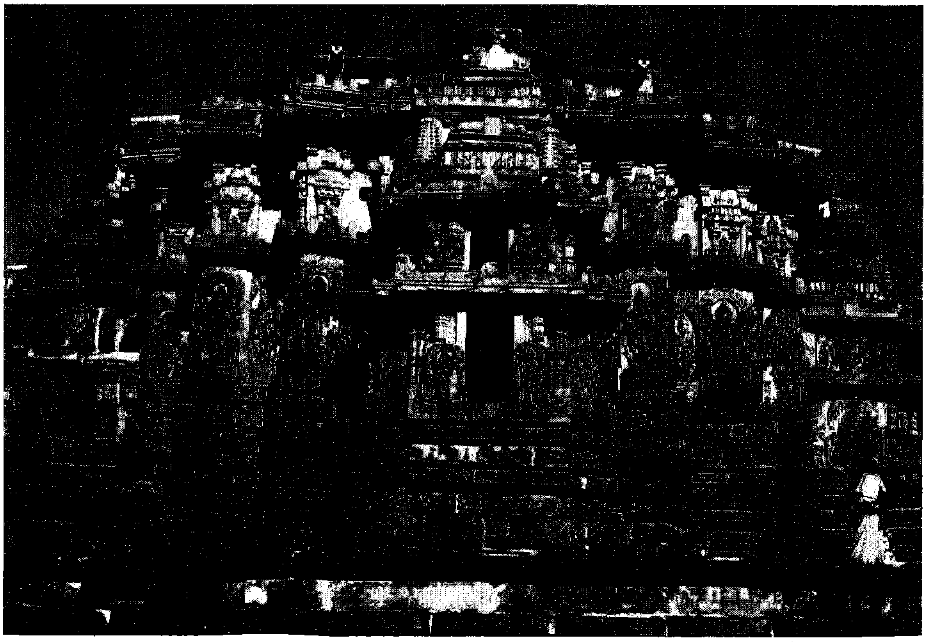

Figure 4.13 Hoysalesvara Temple at Halebid
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

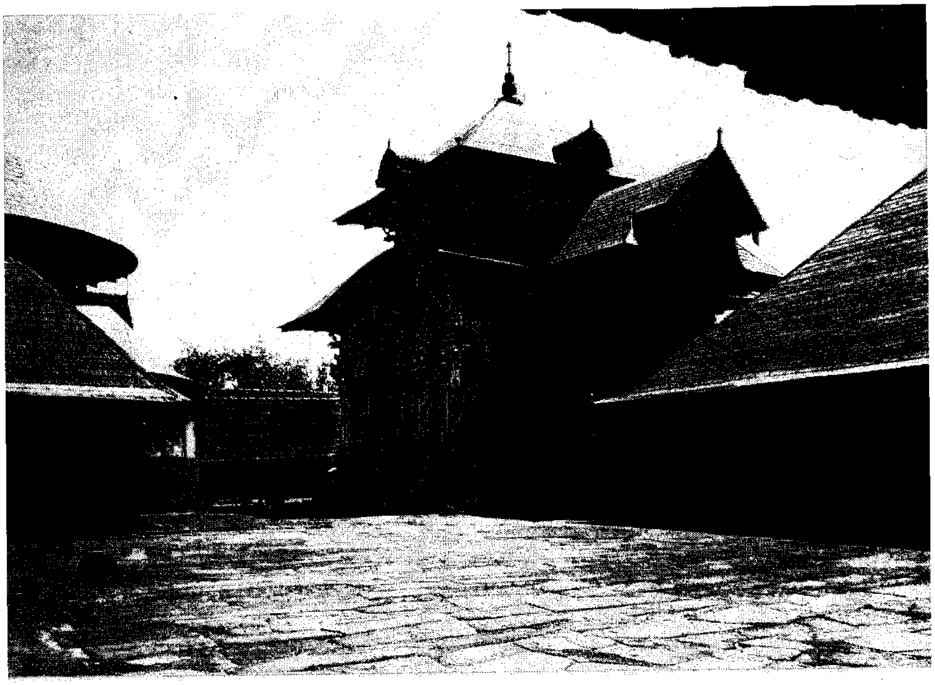

Figure 4.14 Vadakkunatha Temple at Thrissur
Source: Courtesy of Takeo Kamiya.

The Ambarnatha temple (1060 CE) in Thana and the Gondesvara temple in the early twelfth century at Sinnar reflect the high and low points of the Deccani style that was extended into the modern Maharashtra region, characterized by ornate sculpture, with the Gondesvara temple having a *pañcāyatana* format (Sastri 1955b: 481–2). The Seunas of Devagiri in modern Daulatabad region of Maharashtra constructed the Hemadpanti style of temples named after a minister, Hemadri, who reputedly built three hundred temples in the late thirteenth century. These were characterized by heavy form and lack of sculptural embellishment. The Siddhesvara temple at Limpangaon is a typical example (Huntington 1993: 549).

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CHAPTER 5

Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries

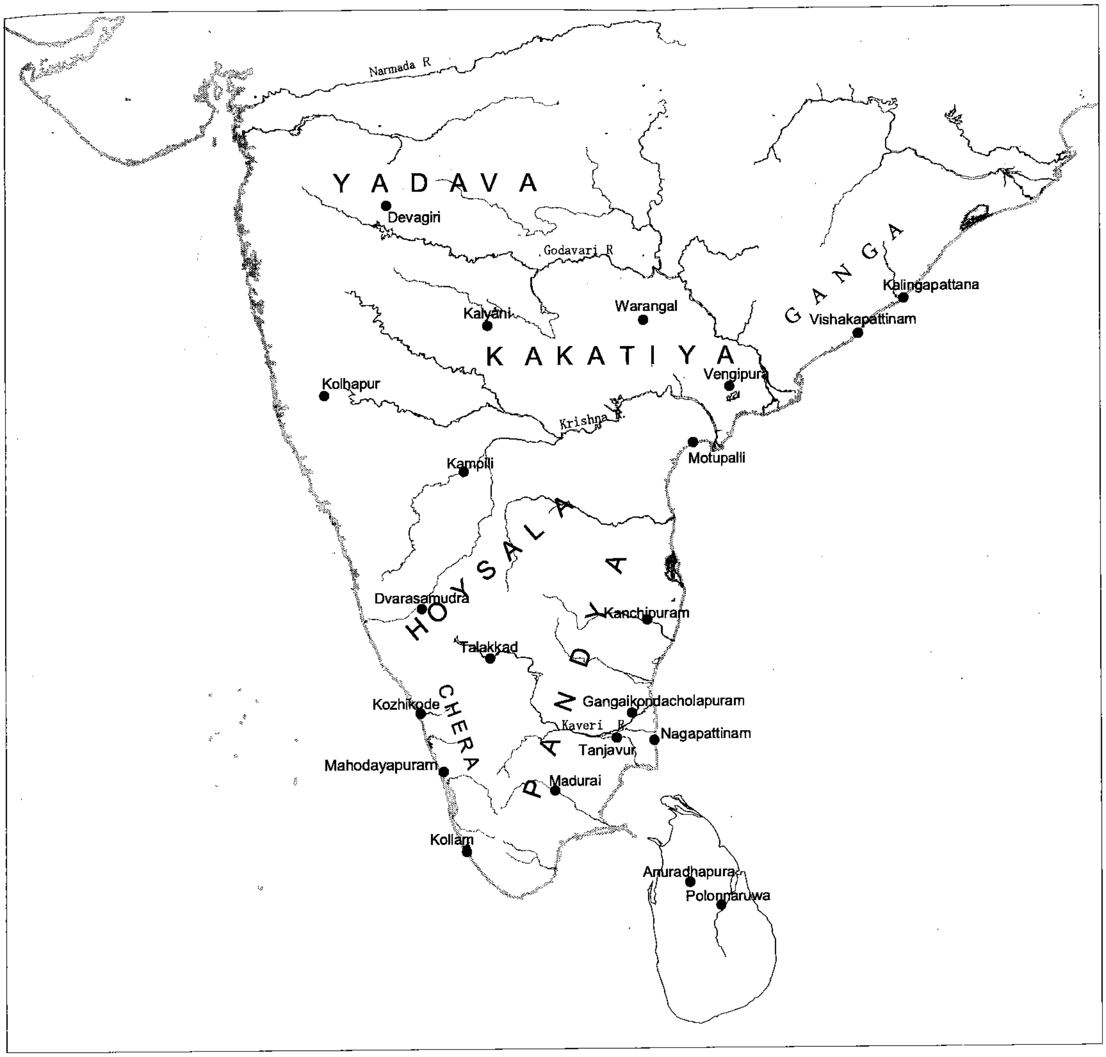
Period of Social Change and Transition

5.1 THE FALL OF THE OLD STATES

NOBORU KARASHIMA

Jatavarman Sundara Pandya, who ascended the throne in 1251, revived the power of the Pandyas, who had long been under the rule of, or subordinate to, the Cholas. He led his army not only to the Chola country, but also to Sri Lanka and Kerala with the intent of bringing them under his control. The Hoysalas, who attained independence from the Chalukyas towards the end of the twelfth century during the reign of Ballala II (1173–1220), helped the Cholas stop the Pandyan invasion into the Chola country by advancing into the middle valley of the Kaveri River. Nevertheless, after the middle of the thirteenth century, the Chola country was overrun by the Pandyan army. Local chiefs such as the Kadavas and the Sambuvas also tried to overthrow the rule of their Chola masters. Rajaraja III (1216–46), who was once taken prisoner by a Kadava chief (Kopperunjinga), was rescued by the Hoysala army. From the north, the Kakatiyas also invaded the Cholas. Though aided by the Hoysalas, the dynastic rule of the Cholas ended around 1279 with Rajendra III. As a consequence of their long presence in the Tamil country to help the Cholas, the Hoy sala kingdom was virtually divided into tw between the two sons of Somesvara (1233–67 in the latter half of the thirteenth centur the south assigned to Ramanatha (1254–92 and the north to Narasimha III (1254–95 Ballala III (1291–1342), son and successor o Narasimha III, reunited the kingdom late but the invasion by the Delhi Sultanate at th beginning of the fourteenth century shook hi rule (see Map 5.1).

Bhillama (1187–91) freed the Seunas (Yada vas) from the Chalukyas, although he was hin dered by the Hoysalas in his attempt to advanc south. He established his capital at Devagiri. Th Seunas continued to fight against the Malw power in the north and the Kakatiyas in the east Singhana (1200–47) who ruled at the beginnin of the thirteenth century succeeded in invadin the Hoysala country. In the latter half of th century, Hemadri, a famous jurist-scholar, developed the Seuna state as its minister. At the en of the thirteenth century, however, the kingdom was vanquished by the Delhi Sultanate.


Narmada R
YADAVA
Devagiri
Godavari R
Kalyani
Warangal
KAKATIYA
GANGA
Kalingapattana
Vishakapattinam
Vengipura
Kolhapur
Krishna R.
Motupalli
Kampili
HOYSALA
Dvarasamudra
Kanchipuram
Talakkad
PANDYA
CHERA
Kozhikode
Gangaikondacholapuram
Kaveri R
Nagapattinam
Tanjavur
Mahodayapuram
Madurai
Kollam
Anuradhapura
Polonnaruwa

Map 5.1 South India in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

The Kakatiya kingdom became powerful under Ganapathi's (1199–1262) long reign. He fought against the Seunas, the Hoysalas, and the Pandyas to acquire the territory of the declining Cholas. Marco Polo, who visited Mutfili (Motupalli), a port of the kingdom, towards the end of the thirteenth century praised the reign of Rudramba, daughter and successor of Ganapathi. However, in 1310, during the reign of Prataparudra II (1295–1326), Warangal, the capital, was pillaged by Malik Kafur, the general of the Khalji ruler (the second Delhi Sultanate). But even after this Prataparudra II expanded the kingdom with the help of seventy-seven loyal military leaders called *nāyakas*, to whom he assigned the territory for protection. In 1323, however, the dynasty collapsed under the attack of Ulugh Khan of the Tughluqs (the third Delhi Sultanate).

The incursions of the Delhi Sultanate into south India started with the Khaljis at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Though Malik Kafur's expedition from 1307 to 1310 subdued all the four powers in the south, namely the Seunas, the Kakatiyas, the Hoysalas, and the Pandyas, it was more in the nature of a raid, rather than an invasion. However, the invasion by Ulugh Khan (later Muhammad bin Tughluq) from 1321 to 1323 terminated the rule of the Seunas and the Kakatiyas. Madurai, the Pandyan capital, came under Tughluq occupation, but its governor, Jalal-ud-din Hasan Shah, declared his independence from the Tughluqs around 1334 and Madurai became an independent sultanate until it fell to Vijayanagar around 1370. The Pandyas shifted their headquarters farther south to the Tenkasi area and ruled a small territory until the end of the sixteenth century. Ballala III of the Hoysalas continued to fight against the invading forces, but in 1342 he died battling the Madurai sultan. His son and successor, Ballala IV, continued his rule in the Hoysala country fighting against the invaders and other enemies till his death, probably in 1345 (Filliozat 1988: 183).

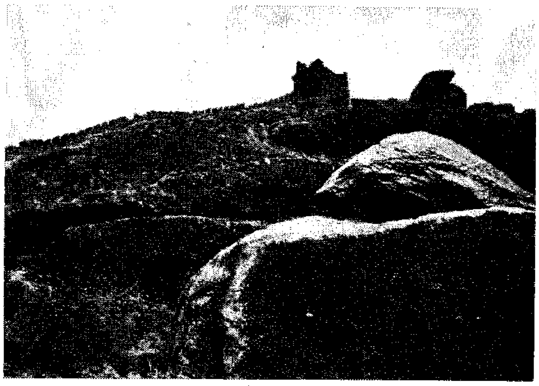


Figure 5.1 Kondavidu Fort
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

The Tughluqs established their southern power bases in Devagiri, Gulbarga, Warangal, Kampili, Madurai, and other places. Though the four kingdoms, except the Hoysalas who managed to hold on, were defeated, some local leaders, including the Prolaya and the Kapaya Nayakas, two of the 77 *nāyakas* of Prataparudra II, the Reddi kings in Kondavidu in Andhra Pradesh (see Figure 5.1), and the Sambuvarayas of northern Tamil Nadu, seem to have resisted the new rule of the Tughluqs for some time, probably together with Ballala III. Though these powers were not successful in their venture of establishing a new kingdom, the Sangama brothers who began ruling the Hampi/Hosapattana area around 1340, succeeded in establishing a new state (Vijayanagar), which brought the vast area south of the Tungabhadra and the Krishna under one umbrella by the end of the fourteenth century. To the north of the rivers, however, a new Muslim sultanate, the Bahmani kingdom, was established in 1347. In the next chapter, we shall examine the circumstances in which the Vijayanagar kingdom was established.

Thus, for about two hundred years—from the beginning of the thirteenth century to the end of the fourteenth century—south India experienced successive wars and anarchy that not only devastated the region but also accelerated the social change that had started in the twelfth century, transforming the south Indian social formation from the old to the new.

5.2 EMERGENCE OF NEW *JĀTIS* AND SUPRA-LOCAL/COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

NOBORU KARASHIMA

From the latter half of the eleventh century there began to appear in Tamil inscriptions some supra-local and/or supra-community organizations variously called *chittiramēḻi-periyanāḍu*, *79-nāḍu*, *periya-vishayam*, *18-vishayam*, *aiñūṟṟuvar*, *valangai*/*iḍangai*, and so on.[1] Their activities were conspicuous during the twelfth and especially the thirteenth centuries. These large organizations, particularly *chittiramēḻi-periyanāḍu*, attracted the attention of past scholars, including Subrahmanya Aiyer who asserted that it was formed under the aegis of the government and carried out the administrative functions of the state (Aiyer 1954/55). This assertion was later criticized by Burton Stein, who regarded the *chittiramēḻi-periyanāḍu* as a peasant institution that grew into a new ruling class (Stein 1980: 223). Both these interpretations are, however, unacceptable. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as stated earlier (section 4.3), there appeared in inscriptions *nāḍu* assemblies established by various ex-hill tribes in North Arcot, South Arcot, and Tiruchirappalli districts; little attention, however, has so far been paid to these assemblies. Unless we consider this together with the emergence of the so-called supra-local/community organizations, we cannot understand the true meaning of their development and, accordingly, the historical implication of the thirteenth century, namely the social change from one formation to another. First, we shall look at some of the inscriptions recording the activities of these supra-local/community organizations as well as those of *nāḍu* assemblies instituted by former hill tribes.

A Tirukkoyilur inscription (*SII*, vii, 129: SA, c. CE 1200) records that the assembly of *chittiramēḻi-periyanāḍu* met in the Vishnu temple of Tirukkovalur called *78-nāṭṭu-18-būmi chittiramēḻi-viṇṇagar* and decided to restore the charity they had made to the temple a long time back on the occasion of consecrating the Earth goddess along with the plough arch. A Nellore inscription (*SII*, v, 496: Nl, CE 1197; Krishnan 1981: 59–66) records that the *periya-vishayam* comprising the *vishayams* of some thirteen *nāḍus* in Jayangondachola-mandalam met at the *chittiramēḻi-viṇṇagar* (Vishnu temple) at Nellur (Nellore) and decided to contribute some land from each village in the area to the temple. The villages of Brahmanas and soldiers were not excluded from this contribution. The writer of the document had the designation *chittiramēḍi-vēlān* (Vellala).

The terms *vishayam*, *bhūmi* (*būmi*), and *nāḍu* are synonymous in these cases, and the qualifying terms *periya*, *78*, and *18* mean 'large', the numbers being just indicative of largeness. Therefore, the Nellore inscription is also a record of the assemblage of *chittiramēḻi-periyanāḍu*. As stated earlier, *chittiramēḻi* means 'beautiful plough' (see Figure 5.2), which indicates that members of this organization were agriculturists, both farmers and cultivators. This is also attested by the fact that a 'plough arch' was made by them in the consecration ceremony of the goddess in Tirukkovalur and 'land' was granted by its members in Nellur.

The Vellalas seem to have initiated the formation of this larger assembly of the *nāḍu*

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[1] *Chittiramēḻi-periyanāḍu* means a 'big *nāḍu* of beautiful plough'. *Vishaya*(*m*) means a 'country' in Sanskrit and is often prefixed to *aiñūṟṟuvar* to mean '*aiñūṟṟuvar* flourishing in 18 *vishayam*'. *Valangai* means 'right hand' and *iḍangai* 'left hand'. Both of them were the names of an assemblage of various communities in and after the twelfth century.

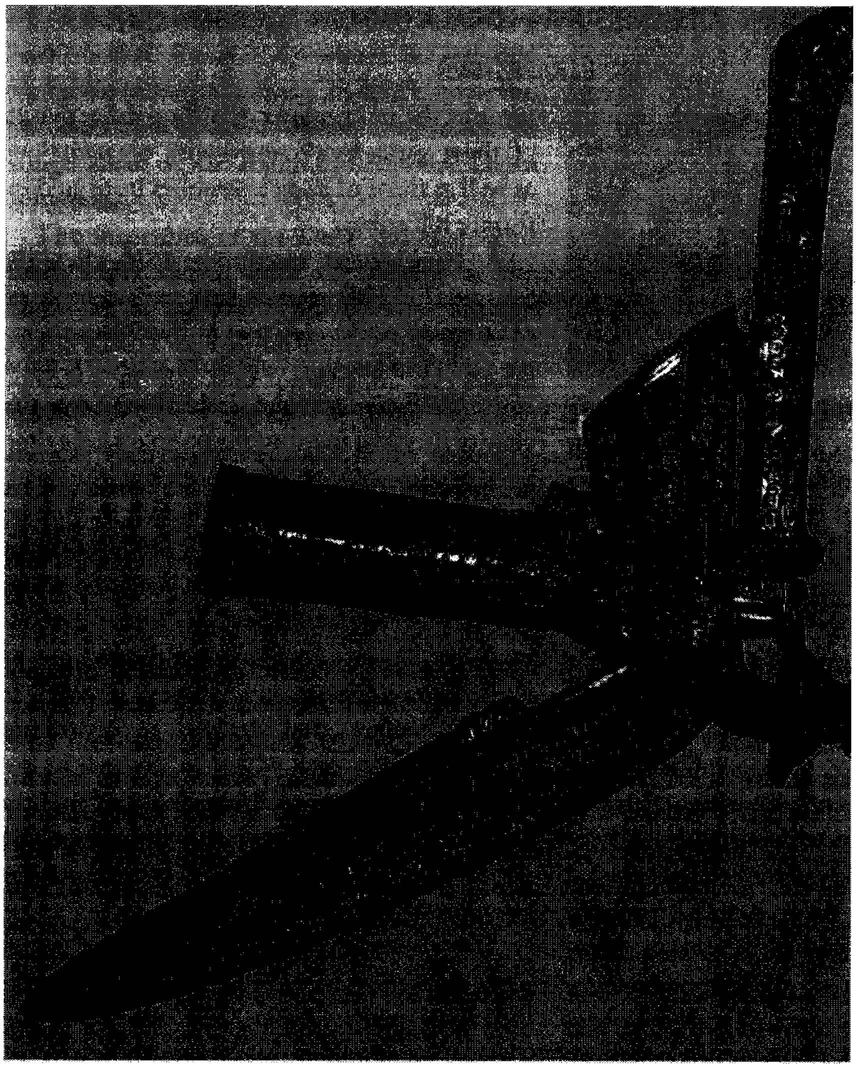

Figure 5.2 *Chittiramé* with Inscription
Source: Courtesy of S. Rajagopal.

in the eleventh century to strengthen their politico-economic position, in the same way that merchants increased their power earlier in the tenth century by establishing supra-local organizations such as *maṇigrāmam* and *ainūṟṟuvar*.[2] The twelfth-century inscriptions, however, show the supra-community characteristic of these organizations (*chittiramēḻi-periyanāḍu* and others), as evidenced by their inclusion of Brahmanas and soldiers in the Nellore inscription above. In the case of other similar organizations, for example, *valangai/iḍangai* or *79-nāḍu*, this point is clearer. A Valikandapuram inscription (*ARE*, 1944, 276: Tp, CE 1227) records a solidarity pact of the *iḍangai-98* communities (*kalanai/jāti*) including the Brahmanas, Ariyar,

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[2] As the eulogies of *chitrameḻi-periyanattar* and *aiñūṟṟuvar* show similarity, and the activity of the latter started earlier in the tenth century while that of the former began in the eleventh century, we can infer that *chitrameḻi-periyanattar* imitated the eulogy of *aiñūṟṟuvar* (Karashima 2009: 131–2).

Nattamakkal, Malaiyamangal, Andanar of Kayangudi, Pannattar, Vaniya-nagaram of *18-vishayam*, and the Kaikkolar of the 'golden palace'. The Nattamakkal and Malaiyamangal are listed as members of *chittiramēḻi-periyanāḍu*. Although the number *98* just means 'many', the people belonging to various communities assembled in the name of *iḍangai-98* and took an oath to stand united and share the good and bad fortunes of each member.

Iḍangai means 'left hand', and *valangai* 'right hand'. Both were originally names of regiments of the Chola army during the tenth and eleventh centuries (Subbarayalu 2012: 167–74), but in the twelfth century and after, for some reason yet unclear, the terms came to mean an assemblage of various communities, including artisans, merchants, cultivators, and hill tribes, as seen earlier. Though Brahmanas and Vellalas were not necessarily excluded from these organizations, the groups assembled as *valangai* or *iḍangai* were mainly people belonging to the lower social sections.[3] Artisans and ex-hill tribes were often responsible for the leadership within these groups. The Nattamakkal, Malaiyamangal, and Pannattar mentioned in the Valikandapuram inscription above were former hill tribes. During the heyday of the Chola rule, many of these hill tribes served in the Chola army as archers or members of other specified regiments. In the twelfth century and after, many of them descended from hills down to the plains, acquired land and became farmers (Karashima 1984: 21–31). They formed their own *nāḍu* assemblages following the practice of the Vellalas and finally joined or formed supra-local and supra-community organizations such as *chittiramēḻi-periyanāḍu* and *valangai/iḍangai* groups. Some of their kin, as stated earlier, became chiefs of certain localities, like the Kadavas in South Arcot district (see Map 5.2).

The Surudimans, one of the ex-hill tribes who became farmers and formed their own *nāḍu* called *añchu-nāḍu* (the five *nāḍu*), recorded their solidarity pact in an Uttattur inscription (*ARE*, 1912, 489: Tp, CE 1218) stating that they were a component of the *iḍangai-98*. The inscription further states that they were born out of the Vedic sacrificial pit and the sage Kasyapa assigned them to the *iḍangai* class. They resolved in the pact that they would stand united with all the other members of the *iḍangai* class, living like one family under one roof. The Pallis, another former hill tribe, who composed the archer regiment of the Chola army, organized themselves as *pan-nāṭṭavar* and recorded their activities in many thirteenth-century inscriptions. In one of them, their area of habitation is described as that bounded by the Pachchai Hills in the west, the tank Viranarayana-pereri in the east, the Pennai River in the north, and the Kaveri River in the south, a large area covering parts of South Arcot and Tiruchirappalli districts. The Kadava chiefs belonged to this ethnic group.

In the assembly of *valangai* and *iḍangai* organizations, groups of artisans, merchants and cultivators, and farmers, including ex-hill tribes, joined together in a show of strength. Cooperation among these different professional groups (castes) is recorded in some inscriptions that describe the *chitramēḻi-periyanāḍu* (agriculturalists) and *aiñūṟṟuvar* (merchants) jointly holding a big assembly (*peruniravi*) to deliberate on certain matters such as making a charity deed (Karashima and Subbarayalu 2004). In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the importance of merchants and artisans increased with the development of maritime trade in

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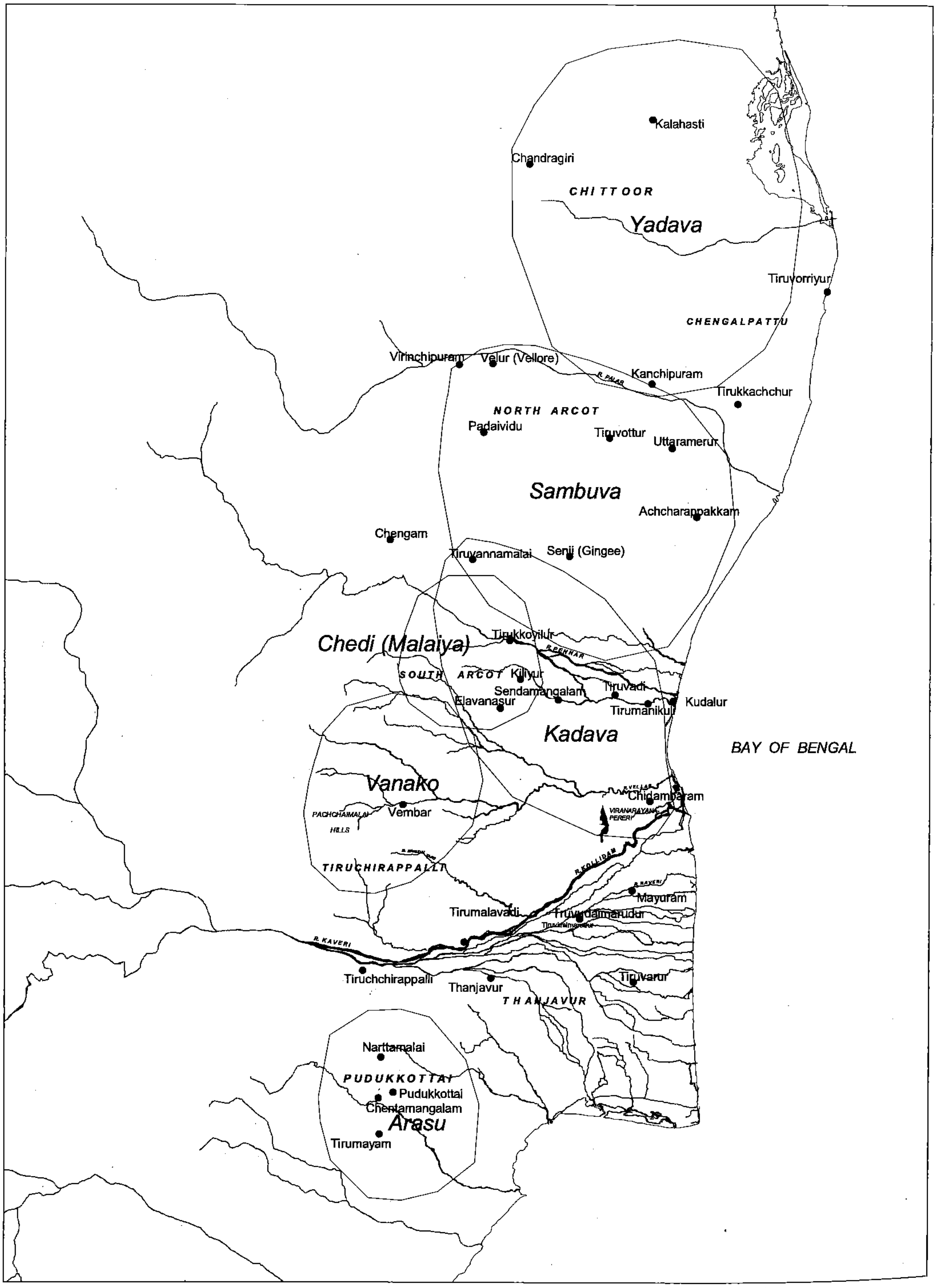
[3] Though some scholars believe that agriculturalists composed the *valangai* group, and artisans the *iḍangai* group, there was no such clear distinction.


Kalahasti
Chandragiri
CHITTOOR
Yadava
Tiruvorriyur
CHENGALPATTU
Virinchipuram
Velur (Vellore)
R. PALAR
Kanchipuram
Tirukkachchur
NORTH ARCOT
Padaividu
Tiruvottur
Uttaramerur
Sambuva
Achcharappakkam
Chengam
Tiruvannamalai
Senji (Gingee)
Chedi (Malaiya)
Tirukkoyilur
R. PENNAR
SOUTH ARCOT
Kiliyur
Sendamangalam
Tiruvadi
Elavanasur
Tirumanikuli
Kudalur
Kadava
BAY OF BENGAL
Vanako
PACHCHAIMALAI HILLS
Vembar
R. VELLAR
Chidambaram
VIRANARAYANA PERERI
R. KOLLIDAM
TIRUCHIRAPPALLI
Mayuram
Tirumalavadi
Tiruvidaimarudur
R. KAVERI
Tiruchchirappalli
Thanjavur
THANJAVUR
Tiruvarur
Narttamalai
PUDUKKOTTAI
Pudukkottai
Chentamangalam
Arasu
Tirumayam

Map 5.2 Chiefs in the Later Chola Period
Source: Karashima 2009: 138.

the Indian Ocean, and so did the importance of ex-hill-tribes with the acquisition of land in the plains. The rise of these people, who had formerly been oppressed by a class of landlords composed of Brahmanas and Vellalas, is well corroborated in contemporary inscriptions and is characteristic of thirteenth-century society. In order to explain this point and to discuss its implication too, we shall examine the imprecations appearing in inscriptions.[4]

As stated in Chapter 3, granting lands to Brahmanas was practised in south India from the period of the Satavahanas. In the inscriptions that record this type of donation, especially in the copper-plate inscriptions recording royal grant of land to Brahmanas, an imprecation is found near the end of the inscription warning those who might cause harm to this charitable grant. A Poona inscription of Vakataka Queen Prabhavatigupta (*CII*, v, 1), recording a village grant by the queen to a Brahmana, quotes the following imprecatory verse composed by Vyasa: 'He who takes away the land given by himself or by others shall incur the sin of killing ten thousand cows.' Killing a cow is counted as one of the minor offences next to the five mortal sins (*mahāpātaka*) in the *Manu-smriti* (XI, 60). A contemporary Damodarpur inscription of Kumaragupta I (*CII*, iii, 22), a Gupta king in the north, recording a land purchase by a Brahmana for conducting Vedic rites, bears the following curse: 'He who takes away land given by himself or by others, having become a worm in excreta, rots with his forefathers.'

The inscriptions of the Pallavas, which followed the Gupta/Vakataka strategy in statecraft, also contain similar imprecations. For example, in the Kasakkudi plates of Nandivarman II (*TPLCP*: pp. 155–69), there is one that says: 'Whoever takes back a property gifted by himself or by others, he shall become a worm in the dung for sixty thousand years.' Though none of the royal land-grant inscriptions of the Cholas has imprecations, in some of the Chola inscriptions that record charities made by common people, we do find various imprecations, including two stereotypes. 'A person who would cause harm to charity shall incur all the sins committed in the land between the Ganges and Kanyakumari' was one of the two and seen in the first half of the Chola period. This was replaced in the second half by another standard imprecation: 'A person who would cause harm to charity shall fall into the sin of killing a tawny cow on the bank of the Ganges.' Both of them were well within the orbit of orthodox Brahmanism following the tradition of earlier dynasties.

In the thirteenth century, however, new types of imprecations appeared, which were entirely different from the Brahmanical ones. For example, a Valikandapuram inscription (*ARE*, 1944, 279: Tp, 1240), recording tax remission of four villages by military leaders, states that the wife of the person who harms this charity would be given to a Pulaiyar[5] who cuts grass for their horses. A Ratnagiri inscription (*ARE*, 1914, 153: Tp, date lost, probably the thirteenth century), recording an agreement made between the *nāḍu* (local assembly), *grāmam* (village assembly), and *nagaram* (town assembly), states that if the person who violates this agreement is a Brahmana, his eyes will be taken out and his nose will be cut ... he will be regarded as a pig ... he will be killed by soldiers ... if the persons who violate the agreement die, their bodies will be treated as those of pigs and dogs....[6]

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[4] For the following discussion on the appearance of new imprecations, see Karashima 2009: 99–114.

[5] The Pulaiyars were one of the outcastes in Tamil Nadu during the British period.

[6] The inscription is so badly damaged that we cannot determine the proper content of the agreement or the full meaning of the imprecation.

The Valikandapuram inscription, we may say, is still within the orbit of Brahmanism, since the key in the curse lies in the lower status of Pulaiyar in the caste hierarchy, but the Ratnagiri inscription was certainly not so, evincing a hatred of Brahmanas, even suggesting killing them, which is the gravest sin listed in the *Manu-smriti* (XI, 55). In North Arcot, South Arcot, and Tiruchirappalli districts, there are many inscriptions with imprecations of this type, including those that record the agreement made by some supra-local and supra-community organizations. The emergence of such curses, therefore, was closely related to an increase in the power of the people from the lower social sections, including the former hill tribes.

With regard to the foregoing point, we have to pay attention to three things. The first concerns premodern gender issues. Leslie Orr examined Tamil inscriptions from the eighth to the seventeenth century to clarify women's identities and roles in precolonial Tamil Nadu. Though she does not report sastraic norms functioning for women, she finds in the fourteenth century an overall and rather sudden decline in their visibility, and sees it as a turning point (Orr 2001). This might also be related to the change discussed above, though we do not know that for sure currently. It needs to be studied further.

Second, there is evidence of the beginnings of *jāti* formation in south India during this period. As seen above, inscriptions of supra-community organizations reveal various community names. For example, a Chengama inscription (*SII*, vii, (118: NA, CE 1258), recording a feud between a local chief and the three sons of his brother involving whole communities in the locality, enumerates nearly thirty groups, starting from Adivarattu-malaiyalar and ending with Irular, under the head of 'all the *jātis*' (Karashima 2009, 99–114).

Despite the word *jātis* used in this inscription, and others too, not all the communities mentioned in the above inscription as *jātis* would fall under that categorization as defined by present-day sociologists. Many of the communities in these inscriptions, however, were certainly ancestors of the later *jātis*. We can say, accordingly, that the thirteenth century, when the Chola state waned and anarchy prevailed, was the period of *jāti* formation in the Tamil country.[7] Many hill tribes were incorporated into the caste hierarchy, taking the form of a new *jāti*. Transformation of the Kaikkolas from the soldiers to weavers, the change of the name of an oil-merchant community from Sankarapadi to Vaniyar, and the evolution of the community of temple women[8] also took place during this period. In Andhra too, though the manner of referring to these caste-like groups was different in Telugu inscriptions, *jāti* formation seems to have started in the thirteenth century (Talbot 2001: 51ff.). Studies and comparative studies of *jāti* formation in Karnataka and other areas are awaited.

The third thing we have to pay attention to is the challenge to Brahmanism as well as the caste hierarchy. From the animosity towards Brahmanas revealed in the Ratnagiri inscription cited above, it is evident that the people of the lower social sections who organized themselves as supra-local/community groups were wary of Brahmanism, as they had long endured social oppression by them and by the Vellalas, who propagated Brahmanical ideas. The appearance of the new type of imprecations, different from the Brahmanical type, was a reflection of a rise in the power of these people in the thirteenth century, when the strength of the Brahmanas and Vellalas waned with the collapse of the Chola state. A thirteenth-century inscription in Tirukkachchur (*SII*, xxvi, 333: Cg) records the lamentation of the Brahmanas and Vellalas that their hegemony was being challenged by 'low' *jātis* who had by then increased their strength (Karashima 2009: 107) (see Figure 5.3).

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[7] *Jāti* formation during the period of political instability is suggested by R. B. Inden (Inden 1990: 82), though the reason for its formation was different in his study area, Bengal.

[8] Leslie Orr is of the view that the evolution of the community of temple women took place in the post-Chola period (Orr 2000: 164).

The assemblage of people from the lower social sections in the *valangai* and *iḍangai* groups can be taken as evidence of their aspiration to an egalitarian society by reshuffling caste groups that were arranged vertically, and by bifurcating them horizontally. However, Brahmanism was already established too firmly in south India to collapse under this challenge, notwithstanding the lamentation among Brahmanas and Vellalas of the time over the decline in their fortunes.

Lastly, we shall note the establishment of political power by ex-hill tribes and an aspect of their rule in the hilly and semi-dry tracts of central and northern Tamil Nadu towards the end of the Chola rule. As already seen in previous sections, hill tribes such as the Kadavas, Sambuvas, and others who served the Chola army increased their strength in the twelfth century and became local chiefs. There are many inscriptions issued by these chiefs recording the remission of the taxes called *pāḍikāval* and others. *Pāḍi* is synonymous with *nāḍu* meaning a locality and *kāval* means protection. Therefore, *pāḍikāval* can be interpreted as 'fee/tax for protection of the locality'. The number of chiefs of the six families whose inscriptions refer to *pāḍikāval* is given in Table 5.1.

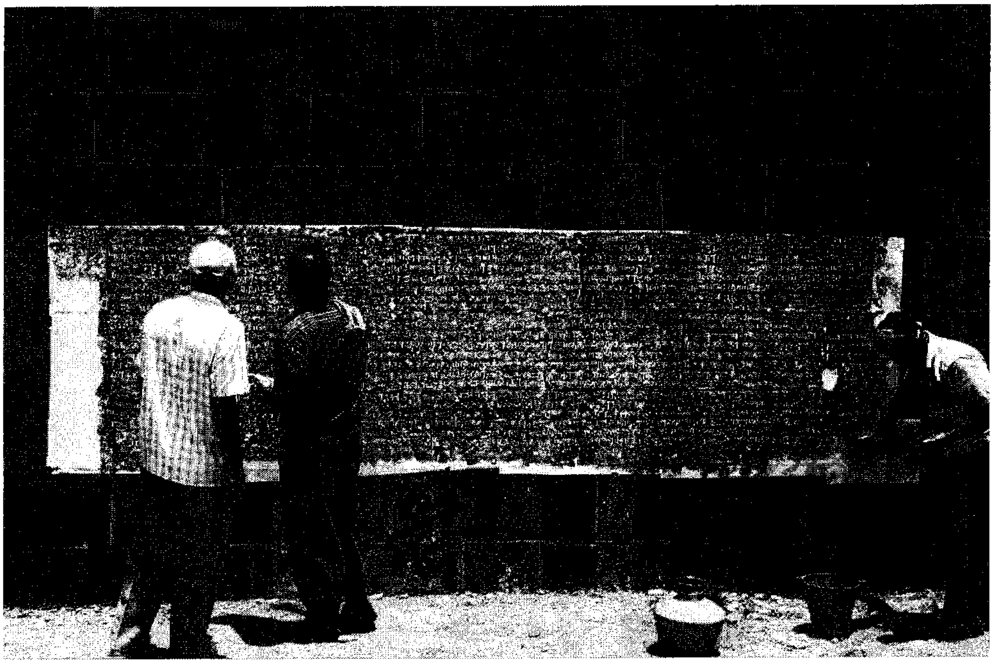

Figure 5.3 Taking a Rubbing of Tirukkachchur Inscription
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

Table 5.1 Chronological Distribution Pattern of Chiefs' Inscriptions Referring to *Pāḍikāval*

	KD	ML	SB	MT	VK	YD	Tota
1101–1150	3	5	3	–	–	–	11
1151–1200	3	6	4	5	3	–	21
1201–1250	5	2	6	–	1	6	20
1251–	4	2	1	–	–	–	7
Total	15	15	14	5	4	6	59

Source: Karashima 2009: 137.
Note: KD = Kadava, ML = Malaiyaman, SB = Sambuva, MT = Muttaraiyan, VK = Vanako, and YD = Yadava.

In the initial stage of their rule, securing permission from the Chola king, these chiefs must have collected only this protection fee from the villages in their traditional area but, with the growth of their power they started to levy, with or without the permission of the king, various taxes such as *taṟi-iṟai*, *taṭṭār-pāṭṭam*, *kaḍaitteru*, *sekku*, and *kamugu-nandavanam*, grouped as *perum* (big)-*pāḍikāval* including *pāḍikāval* in it. Though the Kadavas, Malaiyaman, and Sambuvas who increased their strength greatly during the twelfth century were able to collect a variety of taxes in the name of *perum-pāḍikāval*, other families do not appear to have been permitted to collect taxes other than *pāḍikāval*. From a thirteenth-century inscription we come to know that the amount of *pāḍikāval* was not small and the collection of this tax was an important means for tribal chiefs to increase their political power. Inscriptions from the core area of Chola rule do not mention this tax (Karashima 2009: 136–54).

From the twelfth century, these chiefs of the hilly and semi-dry tracts fought each other over hegemony in their area.. There are more than ten inscriptions of the latter half of the twelfth century and of the first half of the thirteenth recording political pacts between them (Karashima forthcoming) in which they swore to aid their partners against hostile chiefs and that if fighting started they would send men and horses. These pacts reveal that even chiefs belonging to the same tribal family were fighting each other Almost up to the end of the twelfth century they seem to have remained loyal to the Chola kings, but afterwards they became almost independent, as we know from the imprisonment of Rajaraja III for some time by a Kadava chief.

Making and publicly issuing such compacts is unique in the long political history of south India, and it is interesting to note that they were engraved on the walls of certain Hindu temples. Also, *pāḍikāval* inscriptions are to be found in Hindu temples as the tax was remitted by the chiefs for the benefit of those temples, which shows that they adhered to Brahmanical ideas. However, one of the compact inscriptions (*ARE* 1935, 189: Arakandanallur, SA, CE 1205) reveals that the making of the compact was accompanied by a ritual for Durga in a Pidari temple. The ritual included invoking *bhūtam* (evil spirit) and killing a calf and a pregnant sheep, indicating clearly that the chief retained his traditional and tribal beliefs. This may be taken as evidence of a process of acculturation of tribes and that something new could have emerged from this process had these chiefs acquired greater power. However, they were soon subdued by the Pandyas who decimated the Cholas, and the Sambuvas who retained some power in the fourteenth century in northern Tamil Nadu were also vanquished by Vijayanagar state which reimposed the orthodox Brahmanical social order on the people.

5.3 *MAṬHAS*, SAIVASIDDHANTISM, AND VIRASAIVISM

NOBORU KARASHIMA

We have already referred to Sankara (eighth or ninth century in Kerala) as the establisher of the *advaita* school of Vedantism and Ramanuja (eleventh–twelfth centuries in Tamil Nadu) as that of the *viśishṭādvaita* school of philosophy called Sri Vaishnavism. In the thirteenth–fourteenth centuries, Madhva in Karnataka established his own *dvaita* Vaishnavite school. From the philosophical works of these great thinkers we are able to understand the development of religious *thought* in India, particularly in ancient and medieval south India. It is rather difficult, however, to *relate* these developments to the religious *movements* that took place in south India during the time of the Cholas and Pandyas, namely from the ninth to fourteenth centuries.

Fortunately, the activities of *maṭhas* (monasteries), which played an important role in the development and spread of new religious ideas, are recorded in inscriptions from the ninth century onwards and can provide some useful information on the religious movements that occurred during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[9] First, let us take a look at the chronological distribution of the *maṭha* inscriptions (those referring to *maṭha*) in the Tamil country.[10]

The chronological distribution in Table 5.2 indicates a sudden increase of *maṭha* inscriptions in the first half of the twelfth century; it peaks during the thirteenth century, although there is a concentration of inscriptions in the first half of the eleventh century and again later in the Vijayanagar period from 1450 to 1550. The first concentration in the eleventh century can be explained by the fact that there was an influx of many Brahmana ascetics to the Chola country from the north. As already stated in Chapter 4, it is a well-known fact that Rajaraja I, and his son, Rajendra I, had royal preceptors (*rājaguru*/*svāmidēvar*) who belonged to the Saivasiddhanta order coming from the north. Under the influence of these ascetic teachers (*āchārya*), many *maṭhas* began to be established in the Chola country in the eleventh century. The increase again during the Vijayanagar period can be explained by the fact that the Saluva kings instituted a royal grant to the feeding house-cum-*maṭha*, called *rāmānuja-kūḍam*. How, then, do we explain the remarkable increase in *maṭha* inscriptions during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries?

Before answering this question, let us look at some of the functions and activities of a *maṭha*. Besides the inscriptions that record establishment of a *maṭha* by persons who included kings and chiefs, we have a good number of inscriptions that reveal its various activities. A Tiruvorriyur inscription (*ARE* 1912, 200: Cg, CE 1119) records that Kulottungachola I assigned land as tax-free *maṭhapuṟam* (land or money for maintenance) to feed 50 worshippers daily in the Kulōttuṅgachōḻan-maṭha in Tiruvorriyur temple. Besides the feeding (*uṇṇum*) of devotees and/or ascetics living in *maṭhas*, worship (*pūjikkum*), recitation (*ōdum*), and learning (*paḍippār*, *vāchittu*) are also known to have been important regular activities there.

From these inscriptions, as already stated in Chapter 4, we are able to learn that the recitation of *Dēvāram* hymns (*tiruppatiyam*)

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[9] For the *maṭha* studies, see Karashima et al. 2010 and 2011.

[10] In Table 5.2, a broader range of dates of inscriptions is taken than our study period in this section to show the tendency over a long time-span.

Table 5.2 Chronological Distribution of *Maṭha* Inscriptions in the Tamil Country from 900 to 1600 CE

Period	Number
–950	5
–1000	9
–1050	23
–1100	12
–1150	58
–1200	29
–1250	145
–1300	79
–1350	7
–1400	9
–1450	8
–1500	22
–1550	47
–1600	12
Total	465

Source: Based on Karashima et al. 2011: 206.

and *Tirumuṟai* was conducted in *maṭhas*, though this happened mostly in the thirteenth century. This certainly indicates the close relationship of *maṭhas* of the thirteenth century to the *bhakti* movement in Tamil Nadu from the seventh to tenth centuries. The relation is also clear from the fact that many *maṭhas* in the thirteenth century were named after Appar, Sundaraṟ, and Sambandar, the famous *bhakti* saints. If we consider the fact that the publication of the *Periyapurāṇam* and the compilation of *Tirumuṟai* took place in the twelfth century, we may say that the increase in the number of *maṭha* inscriptions in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries reflected the upsurge in people's devotion for *bhakti* saints kindled by these writings (Saiva hymns and hagiology of *bhaktas*).

If we do a check on persons who established a *maṭha* or granted a *maṭhapuṟam*, we find a change of community/class between the eleventh and twelfth centuries. While Brahmanas were dominant among the founders and supporters of *maṭhas* in the earlier period up to the eleventh century, non-Brahmana communities, including Vellalas and various communities of merchants and artisans, were more conspicuous in and after the twelfth century. Because of the vanquishing of the Chola and Pandyan states, the percentage of the royal support to *maṭhas* declined in the fourteenth century. We find in a thirteenth-century inscription (*SII*, vii, 69: NA, CE 1250) a reference to Chittiramēḻi-maṭha, which must have been established and supported by members of the *chitramēḻi-periyanāḍu.*[11] From the remarkable increase in *maṭha* inscriptions in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and also the participation of various non-Brahmana communities in *maṭha* activities, we may be justified in saying that there occurred some religious movement in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and that it must have been closely related to the increase in that period of the power of the lower social strata that we have noted in the previous section.

As stated earlier, the establishment of *maṭhas* and their activities began with the coming of Saiva ascetics from the north, such as the Pasupata and Kalamukha sects, but from the eleventh century onwards the ascetics of the Saivasiddhanta sect represented by the Golaki order replaced them and assumed leadership of *maṭha* activities. The Golaki order seems to have originated in the Vindhyas and spread widely both to the north as well as the south (Swamy 1975). In the initial stages they seem to have stressed the importance of adhering to orthodox Brahmaṇism, but from the twelfth century they began to be affected by the south Indian religious tradition, particularly by *bhakti* worship, which explains the recitation of *bhakti* hymns in their *maṭhas*, as in the other contemporary *maṭhas* of the thirteenth century. Though it is difficult to say which of the two—the localization/Tamilization or the participation of non-Brahmanas in *maṭha* activities—was the cause and which the result, it is certain that both were closely related. In the thirteenth century, as a natural consequence of these processes, Meykandar, a Vellala ascetic, published, in Tamil, the *Sivagnānabōdam*, the essence of the Saivasiddhanta philosophy. This marked the establishment of Tamil (south Indian) Saivasiddhantism as separate from Sanskrit Saivasiddhantism.

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[11] In the sixteenth-century inscriptions, we find a reference to Periyanattu-matha (*TVNI*, pp. 615–22: NA, CE 1512) and a record of a monetary contribution to a *maṭha* by the *iḍangai* and *valangai* people (*SII*, xxii, 103: SA 1533).

In the case of Vaishnavism, as stated earlier, the localization/Tamilization was seen both in the works of Ramanuja who tried to combine popular *bhakti* worship and orthodox Vedanta philosophy, and in the split of the Srivaishnavas into *vaḍagalai* (northern) and *tengalai* (southern) sects, which employed Sanskrit and Tamil respectively in the text and worship.

The chronological distribution of *maṭha* inscriptions, as shown in the foregoing account, clearly indicates that some religious change took place during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with the *maṭhas* as among the important channels. This religious movement was closely related to the social change that we discussed in the previous section, as many from the lower social strata, including cultivators, merchants, artisans, and former hill tribes, who increased their power markedly, participated in the activities of the *maṭhas* in those centuries. We can say, therefore, that the religious movement through the *maṭhas* of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that caused the emergence of Tamil Saivasiddhantism, was an ideological manifestation of the social change examined in the previous section.[12]

In twelfth-century Karṇataka, when Bijjala (1156–68) was ruling at Kalyani as the Kalachuri king and Basava was his prime minister, Virasaivism ('Heroic' Saivism) gained power. The Virasaivas worshipped only Siva and, because they wore a small *linga* on their person, they were also called Lingayats. Their tradition traces the origin of Virasaivism to very early times and Basava was not its originator. As one of the elders/saints (*nūtanapurātana*)s of the order, he imparted its dogma along with his ideas to the people, making good use of his position as prime minister to stress the equality of all people, deny caste distinctions and supremacy of the Brahmanas, and treating widows with respect. The *maṭha* and its presiding *guru* were very important in the daily lives of Lingayats. All these features seem to suggest that the movement of this new Saiva sect in Karnataka was an echo of, or parallel to, the reform movement seen in Tamil society starting from the twelfth century. Vijaya Ramaswamy, who examined Virasaivite *vachanas* (religious verses in Kannada), particularly those written by women devotees, argues that Virasaivism in Karnataka in the twelfth century tried to overturn not only Brahmanical superiority but also patriarchal values. According to Ramaswamy, women were as visible as men and perhaps more vocal in the twelfth-century Virasaivism movement (Ramaswamy 1996).

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[12] Past studies on the establishment of Tamil Saivasiddhantism separately from Sanskrit Saivasiddhantism, have emphasized only the role of Meykandar and Umapati, or otherwise the contemporary supremacy of Muslim power in the north (for example, Prentiss 1996), and overlooked this point, except R. Champakalakshmi who paid due attention to the relations between social change and the vitalization of *maṭha* activities (Champakalakshmi 2011: 74). Social change, and the consequent religious movement in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, was the real agent of the establishment of Tamil Saivasiddhantism.

According to a Virasaiva legend, Basava plotted the assassination of Bijjala who had intended to take out the eyes of two Virasaiva devotees and, according to another Jain work, Basava sent a poisoned fruit to Bijjala and then threw himself into a well. It seems that there occurred some trouble between Basava and hi overlord around their creed. Bijjala seems t have been either a Jain or an orthodox Saivit After the alleged murder of Bijjala, a large-scal massacre of Virasaivites occurred in the regio of Kalyana and their open activity waned Virasaivism, however, resurfaced in the nex century and spread in southern Karnataka too although it seems to have lost its radicalism o the twelfth century.

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CHAPTER 6

Fifteenth Century to Seventeenth Century

Vijayanagar State and the Wider World

6.1 VIJAYANAGAR AND THE SULTANATES IN THE DECCAN

NOBORU KARASHIMA

For more than a century since the beginning of the thirteenth, south India had been divided politically into four states fighting each other and had also been invaded by the army of the Delhi Sultanate at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The establishment of Vijayanagar state changed this situation, consolidating almost the whole area south of the Tungabhadra River into one state for about three centuries from the middle of the fourteenth century (see Map 6.1). Immediately after or almost simultaneously with the establishment of the Vijayanagar state, there emerged to the north of the Raichur doab, the Bahmani state, which became independent of the Delhi Sultanate in 1347. Soon after, there began long and persistent fighting between Vijayanagar in the south and the Bahmani and its successor states in the north. Ultimately, both were ruined in the seventeenth century; the Vijayanagar state was destroyed by the successor states of the Bahmanis in the middle of the century and the latter, in turn, by the Mughal forces towards the end of the century.[1]

As the veracity of the popular story that attributes the founding of Vijayanagar state to Harihara and Bukka, the two sons of Sangama, has long been controversial,[2] we shall discuss

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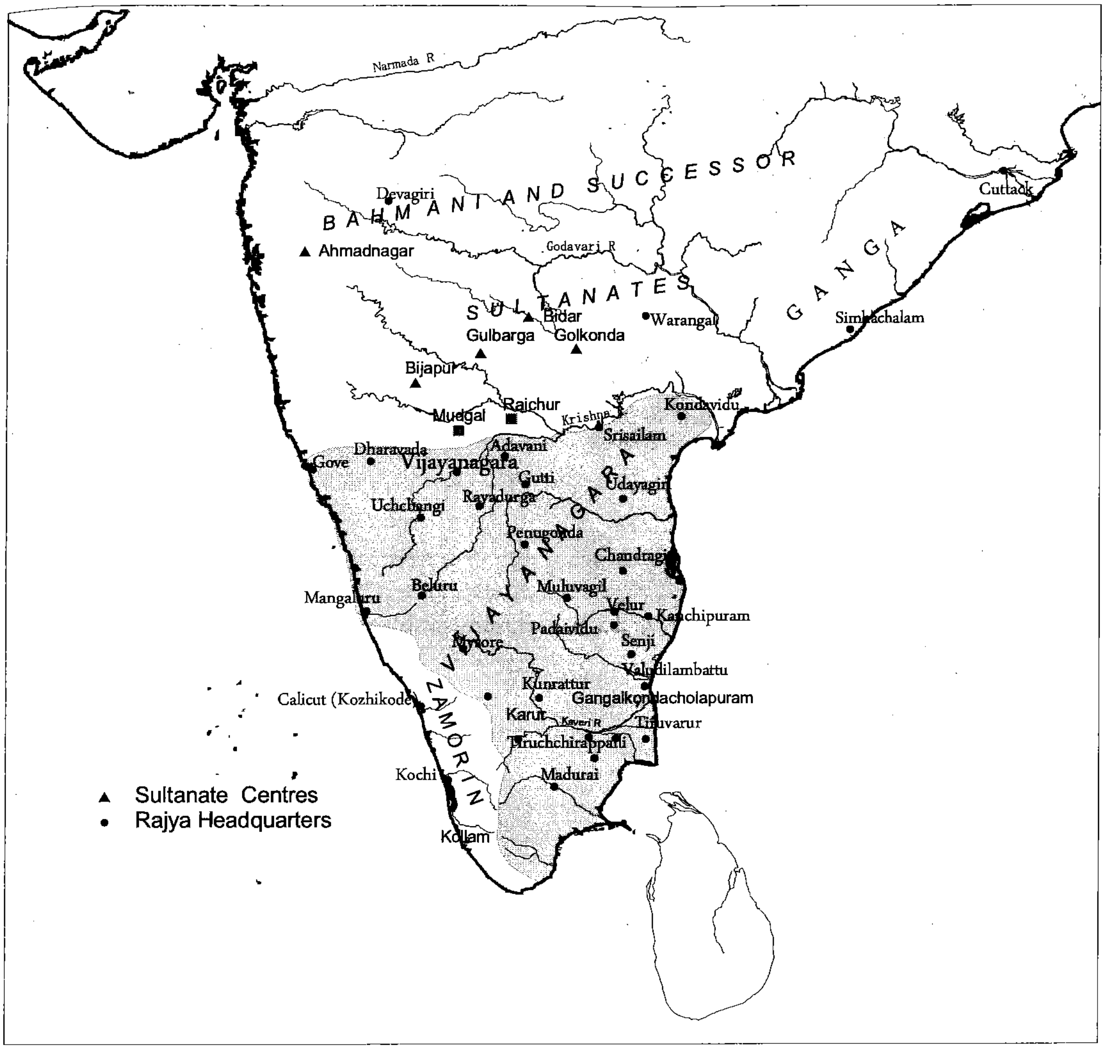
[1] For studies on the Bahmani and its successor states in the Deccan, see Hambly 1985 and Eaton and Wagoner 2014.

[2] Some scholars (N. Venkataramanayya, Nilakanta Sastri, and others) believe that Harihara and Bukka had served the Kakatiya king, Prataparudra, before seeking refuge in Kampili from where they were taken to Delhi, while some others (B. A. Saletore, Krishnaswami Ayyangar, P. B. Desai, S.H. Ritti, and others) insist that they were originally vassals of the Hoysala king, Ballala III. The first view had long been adopted in many historical works, but recently Hermann Kulke (Kulke 1985) and Vasundhara Filliozat (Filliozat 1973; 1988) have strongly supported the latter view, which will be followed here. The two theories differ also on the date of commencement of the Vijayanagar rule (see section 6.4).


Narmada R
BAHMANI AND SUCCESSOR
Devagiri
Ahmadnagar
Godavari R
SULTANATES
Bidar
Warangal
Gulbarga
Golkonda
Bijapur
GANGA
Cuttack
Simhachalam
Raichur
Mudgal
Krishna
Kondavidu
Srisailam
Dharavada
Gove
Vijayanagara
Adavani
Gutti
Udayagiri
Uchchangi
Rayadurga
Penugonda
Chandragiri
VIJAYANAGARA
Beluru
Muluvagil
Mangaluru
Velur
Kanchipuram
Padaividu
Mysore
Senji
Valudilambattu
Kunrattur
Gangaikondacholapuram
Calicut (Kozhikode)
ZAMORIN
Karur
Kaveri R
Tiruvarur
Tiruchchirappalli
Madurai
Kochi
Kollam
▲ Sultanate Centres
● Rajya Headquarters

Map 6.1 South India, c. 1350–1650
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

it in a later section. For now, suffice it to say that Harihara and Bukka established their rule sometime around 1340 in the Hampi/Hosapattana area on the southern banks of the Tungabhadra opposite the old town of Anegundi (see Figure 6.1). In the Hoysala country, Balala III, who died in the south near Tiruchirappalli in 1342 fighting against the Madurai Sultan, was succeeded by his son, Ballala IV, who seems to have ruled the northern part of the country in league with Harihara and Bukka, most likely headquartered in the Hampi/Hosapattana area, until his death, probably in 1345. After the death of Ballala IV, Harihara (I) succeeded him and began to rule independently with the help of his brothers.

Bukka, whose earliest inscription is dated to 1336 (Filliozat 1973: 2 [ins. 3]), succeeded

Figure 6.1 View of Vijayanagara from Matanga Hill
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

Harihara who died in 1357. The name of the capital, Vijayanagara, appears for the first time in an inscription of 1356 (Filliozat 1988: 187), which probably indicates his renovation of the city (Hampi/Hosapattana) or the construction of a new royal centre. In an inscription by his minister dated to 1368 he is mentioned for the first time with the full imperial title *mahārājādhirāja-paramēśvara* (Kulke 1985: 125–6; 2001: 217–20). It was during his reign that his son, Kampana, undertook southern campaigns to subdue first the Sambuvarayas in the Kanchipuram area and then the sultanate of Madurai. The sultanate seems to have been conquered by around 1370. In the north, however, war started against the newly established Bahmani state over the seizure of the Raichur doab in the north and Goa in the west.

Harihara II (1377–1404) captured Goa and extended his rule to the Coromandel Coast by subduing the Reddis in Kondavidu. He also sent an expedition to Sri Lanka, but his capital was threatened by the Bahmani state from the north. The kingdom at this time was divided into four big regional units called *rājyas* surrounding the central region, such as Udayagiri-rajya in the east, Penugonda-rajya in the mid-east, Mulavay-rajya in the south, and Araga-rajya in the west. Each *rājya* was ruled by princes or influential personages. The reign of Devaraya II (1422–46) was the heyday of the Sangama dynasty of Vijayanagar. He invaded Orissa in the east and Kerala in the south. With the Bahmanis he maintained peace through marital relations. According to Abdur Razak, the Persian ambassador who visited Vijayanagar during Devaraya's reign, the latter's dominion extended from Ceylon to Gulbarga and from Bengal (Orissa) to Malabar. Later, however, during the reign of his two weak successors (Mallikarjuna and Virupaksha II), Kapilesvara Gajapati of Orissa invaded the Tamil country reaching beyond Tiruchirappalli, and the Bahmanis recaptured Goa. A rebellion also took place in the Tamil country.

Saluva Narasimha, who had ruled the Chandragiri-rajya in the northern Tamil country, regained Udayagiri from Kapilesvara, suppressed the rebellion in the Tamil country, and extended the rule of Vijayanagar to the Godavari River, with the help of Narasa Nayaka of the Tuluva family. Narasimha ascended the throne in 1486 as the first ruler of the Saluva dynasty. However, the troubles with the Gajapatis and the Bahmanis continued and after his death in 1491 Narasa Nayaka became the de facto king and recovered some of the lost territories. In 1505, his son, Vira Narasimha, usurped the kingship of the Saluvas and launched the third, Tuluva, dynasty of the Vijayanagar state.

During the reign of Vira Narasimha (1505–09), Bijapur, one of the successor states of the Bahmanis, invaded from the north and a rebellion broke out in Ummattur in the Mysore area. Krishnadevaraya (1509–29), who succeeded Vira Narasimha, suppressed the Ummattur uprising and attacked the Gajapatis, proceeding up to Simhachalam. He maintained good relations with the Portuguese, who captured Goa in 1510, as he needed good imported horses from Arabia, and seized the Raichur doab by battling Bijapur in the north. Within ten years of his coronation, Vijayanagar state acquired the largest territory in its history. Krishnadeva is known as a patron of the arts, and in his court, Allasani Peddana and other poets found favour. He himself is supposed to have written the *Āmukta-mālyada*, a Telugu poem dealing with the life of Perialvar, and with Vaishnava philosophy. *Rāyavācakamu*, a Telugu historical prose work composed later in the court of the Madurai Nayaka,[3] purports to report events in Krishnadevaraya's reign, as if the author of that work had lived contemporaneously.

Zafar Khan (Hasan Gangu), who had been ruling the northern Deccan for Muhammad bin Tughluq, declared his independence in 1347 in Gulbarga and established the Bahmani state, so-called because he claimed descent from a half-mythical Persian hero, Bahman. The Bahmani state fought against Malwa and Gujarat in the north and Vijayanagar in the south. In the first half of the fifteenth century the capital was moved to Bidar. The Bahmani state employed many foreigners from west and central Asia making them a conspicuous presence in court. As the foreigners were generally Shias, there arose conflicts between them and the local Muslims called Deccanis, who were Sunnis.

In the latter half of the fifteenth century, Mahmud Gawan, a Persian, became the prime minister or *pēshwa* (see Figure 6.2). Under his strong leadership, and due to the deterioration in the Vijayanagar rule after Devaraya II, the Bahmani state increased its power by capturing Goa in the west and taking Kanchipuram in the Tamil country. However, in 1481 the Sultan executed Gawan for involvement in the ongoing conflict between the foreigners and the Deccanis at his court. The state declined rapidly afterwards, allowing local chiefs to strike out on their own. Consequently, there arose independent states such as Berar in the Vidarbha region, Ahmadnagar in the western part of the Deccan, Bijapur in the area adjacent to Vijayanagar in the south, and Golkonda in the former Kakatiya region. Also, in the greatly reduced Bahmani state a Bidari family usurped the sultanate and the Bahmani state came to be known as Bidar. Thus, by the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Bahmani state had disintegrated into five different states.

In Vijayanagar, succession disputes arose with the death of Krishnadevaraya in 1529. Achutadevaraya succeeded him, supported by Saluva Viranarasingaraya-nayaka (or simply Saluva Nayaka). But the new king came to terms with Rama Raja, Krishnadevaraya's son-in-law, who had supported Krishnadeva's infant son for the throne against Achutadeva and Saluva Nayaka, and the latter rebelled in the south against the new king. However, Saluva Nayaka was soon subdued and taken captive. Achutadevaraya recovered Raichur from Bijapur, but

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[3] It has been translated and analysed in Wagoner 1993.

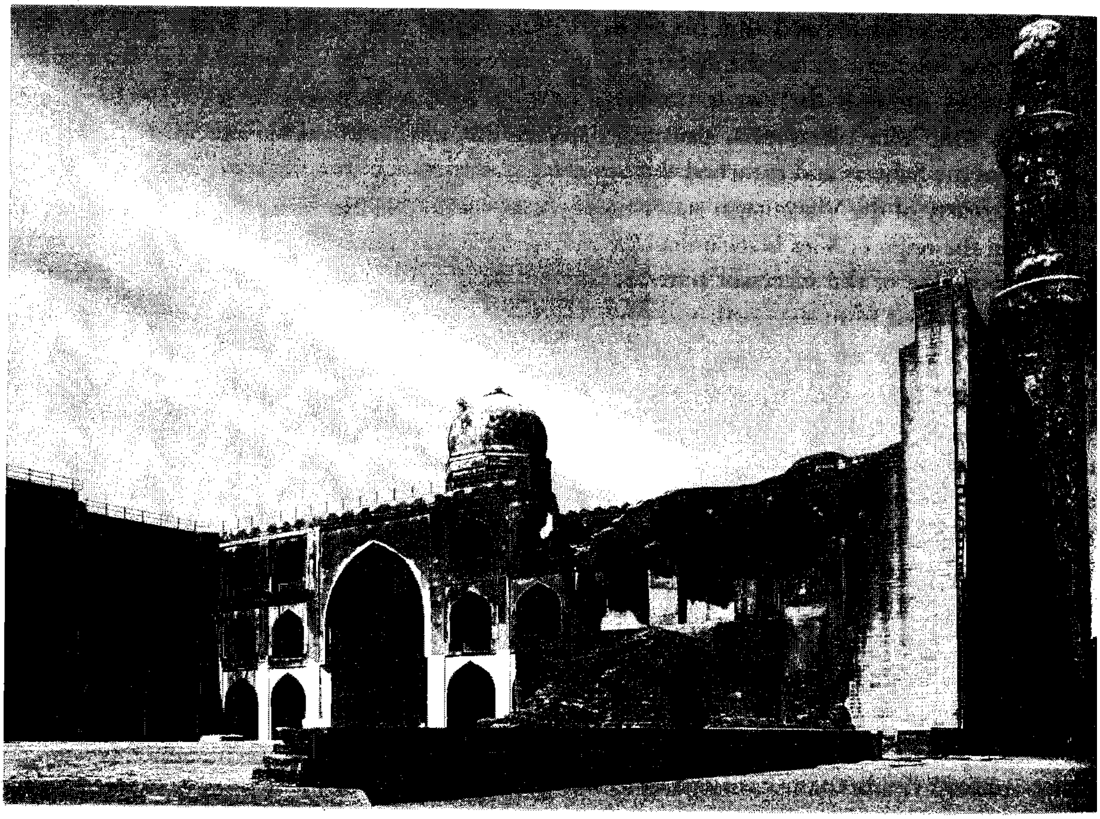


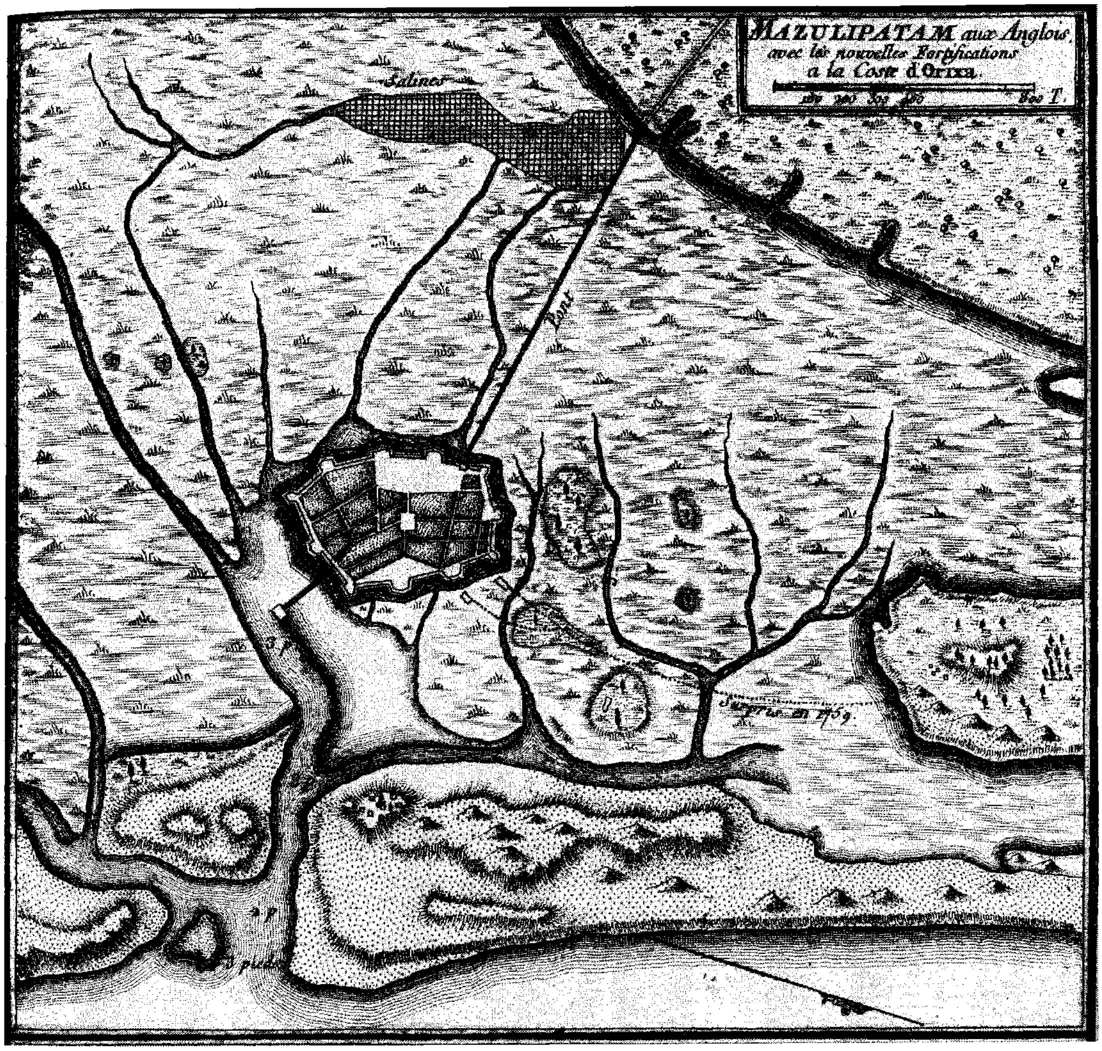
Figure 6.2 Mahmud Gawan Madrasa at Bidar
Source: Courtesy of Takeo Kamiya.

soon after, the power in court shifted to Rama Raja. After another succession dispute, which occurred again on the death of Achutadevaraya in 1542, his nephew Sadasiva ascended the throne. But actual power was in the hands of Rama Raja, who became the chief minister, and of his brother Tirumala.

Rama Raja's diplomacy with the five states in the north involved intrigues and a policy of 'divide and rule' to keep them fighting amongst themselves. However, in course of time, this produced the opposite result and induced the five sultanates to strengthen their unity, ultimately leading to the decisive battle of Rakshasi-Tangadi (Talikota) in 1565, where the federation of these sultanates defeated the Vijayanagar state. Rama Raja was captured and killed and the capital city was trampled down under the hoofs of the triumphant army of the five sultanates.

Tirumala escaped with Sadasiva from the capital and retreated to Penugonda in the southeast. However, Tirumala deposed Sadasiva and himself ascended the throne in 1569, opening the fourth, Aravidu, dynasty. He got his three sons—in Penugonda, Srirangapatna, and Chandragiri—to rule over the Andhra, Karnataka, and Tamil regions respectively. In the Tamil region, however, the big *nāyakas* of Senji, Thanjavur, and Madurai increased their power and became nearly independent. Venkata II, who commenced his rule towards the end of the sixteenth century, is said to have been the last Vijayanagar king who could deal successfully with external problems and control internal disorders effectively. He recovered the lost area up to the Krishna River, stopped the invasion by Bijapur and Golkonda, though he later moved the capital to Chandragiri, farther to the southeast, near Tirupathi. He also subdued the rebellions of the southern *nāyakas* and maintained good relations with the Dutch who advanced to the Coromandel Coast, founding their factories in Masulipatam (see Map 6.2) and Pulicat.

However, when Venkata II died in 1614 leaving no heir, another great dispute around succession arose, which continued for more than ten years. This involved the three bigger southern *nāyakas* and was responsible for an invasion by Bijapur and Golkonda that


MAZULIPATAM aux Anglois,
avec les nouvelles Fortifications
a la Coste d'Orixa.
100 200 300 400 800 T.
Salines
Pont
Surpris en 1759

Map 6.2 Masulipatam Fort. A Part of a Map Published in Paris in 1770
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima, who owns the map.

accelerated the disintegration of the state and, when the Thanjavur Nayaka, with whom Sriranga III had sought refuge, was defeated by Bijapur in 1649, the final curtain rang down on Vijayanagar.

Around this time, the English, who advanced to the Coromandel Coast following the Dutch, founded Fort St George in Madras that was procured from local *nāyakas* in 1639. Of the five states in the Deccan, Berar was annexed to Ahmadnagar in the latter half of the sixteenth century and Bidar was merged into Bijapur a the beginning of the seventeenth. The Mughal from the north attacked the remaining three, i turn, with Ahmadnagar in 1636 the first to b vanquished. Though Bijapur and Golkonda terminated the rule of Vijayanagar in the middle o the seventeenth century, they were also defeated in 1686 and 1687, respectively by the Mughal who began to rule the Telugu and Tamil countries posting their representatives in Hyderabad, clos to the Golkonda Fort, and Arkadu, close to Velur

6.2 VIJAYANAGAR STATE AND THE *NĀYAKAS*

NOBORU KARASHIMA

6.2.1 The *Nāyaka* System

Robert Sewell's *A Forgotten Empire*, published in 1900, was the starting point of a concentrated series of historical studies on Vijayanagar. After this the studies progressed rapidly due to the efforts of various scholars, including Krishnaswami Aiyangar, Nilakanta Sastri, B. A. Saletore, N. Venkataramanayya, and T. V. Mahalingam in the early stages. Many important works have been produced more recently as well.[4] One of the most important topics discussed by these scholars is the role played by the *nāyakas* (military leaders with some assigned territory) in the Vijayanagar polity and their character. The *nāyakas* appear in various sources of the Vijayanagar period.

After enumerating the amount that the eleven big *nāyakas* had to remit to the state treasury as revenue for their assigned territory, Fernao Nuniz, the Portuguese horse-merchant who stayed in Vijayanagar city during the reign of Achutadevaraya (see Figure 6.3), writes the following about the *nāyakas* (Sewell 1962: 370):

> In this way the kingdom of Bisnaga (Vijayanagar) is divided between more than two hundred captains (*nāyakas*) who are all heathen, and according to the lands and revenues that they have so the King settles for them the forces that they are compelled to keep up, and how much revenue they have to pay him every month (year?) during the first nine days of the month of September.

The land thus assigned to the *nāyakas* is thought to have covered a large part of the Vijayanagar territory. Many scholars have suggested a resemblance of this system of assigning the state land to the *nāyakas* to the feudalism of medieval Western Europe, though there are some differences in understanding among the scholars. On this point, however, Burton Stein put forward an entirely different interpretation.

First, Stein in most of his works uses the term *nāyaka* for only such big *nāyakas* as those of Senji, Thanjavur, and Madurai. As for the other *nāyakas*, he either ignores their existence or refers to them simply as chiefs, magnates, or *poligars* by postulating that their power base was the communal organization in the locality built on kinship and caste relations. This strange treatment of the *nāyakas* by Stein comes from his

[4] Important works are all listed in the Bibliography at the end of this chapter.

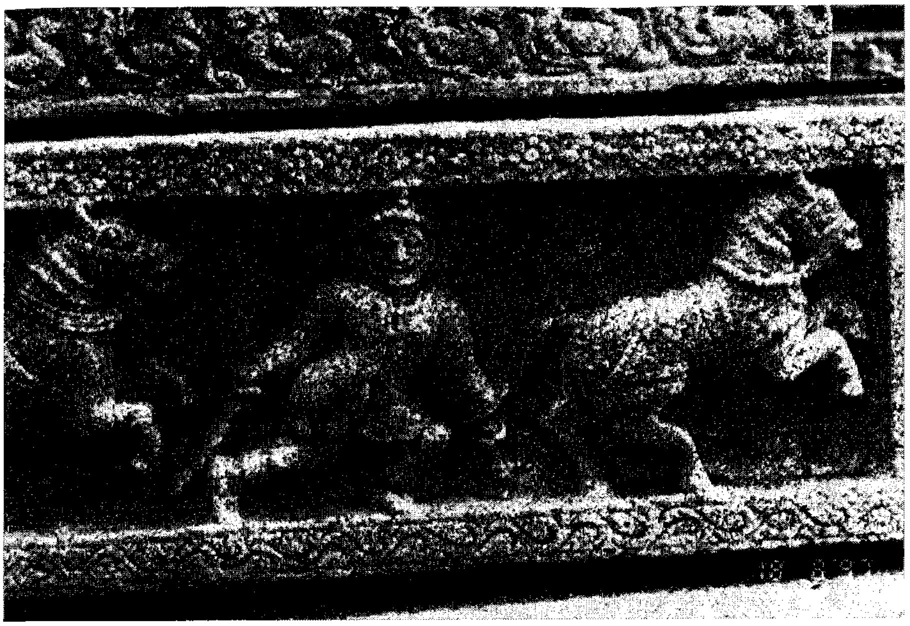


Figure 6.3 Portuguese Horse Merchant (?) in a Vittala Temple Relief at Hampi
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

intention to apply the 'segmentary state' theory to the Vijayanagar state too by regarding the local powers as segments that did not acknowledge the political authority of the king.[5]

In the inscriptions, however, we definitely come across a large number of *nāyakas* who had close relations with the Vijayanagar kings or worked for some of the big *nāyakas* as their under-lords or agents. The number of *nāyakas* appearing as such in the Vijayanagar inscriptions in Tamil Nadu alone amounts approximately to five hundred, whereas Stein estimates the number as only about 58 following an insufficient survey made by A. Krishnaswami (Krishnaswami 1964). Table 6.1 shows the chronological and topographical distribution of the *nāyakas* appearing in the Tamil Nadu inscriptions. If we count the *nāyakas*, including those in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, the number will be more than double (Karashima 2002: 20; Talbot 2001).

As for the 'land' of the *nāyakas* referred to by Nuniz, we frequently come across references to the territory (*sīma*, *sīme*, or *sīrmai*) described in inscriptions as *nāyakatana* (*nāyakkattanam*). Thus a Manalurpet inscription (*ARE* 1938, 465: CE 1552) records that Surappa Nayaka granted to the Manalur temple two villages in Magada-mandalam alias Irakuttanallur-sirmai, which was given to him by the king (Sadasivadeva) as *nāyakkattanam*. This, together with other inscriptions, clarifies that the *nāyakatana* was assigned to *nāyakas* by the king. It is also clear from inscriptions and the statement of Nuniz that the *nāyakas*, on their part, had to collect revenue in their territories to remit a certain amount to the state and also to maintain an

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[5] In the last stage of his study of medieval South Indian states, Stein acknowledges the political authority of the king combined with his ritual authority (Stein 1991), but he does not seem to recognize the actual political relationship the *nāyakas* had with the king.

Table 6.1 Chronological and Typographical Distribution of the *Nāyakas* Appearing in Tamil Nadu Inscriptions

Period	Cg	NA	SA	TT	S	W	TOTAL*
1326–50	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1351–75	2	1	1	0	0	3	7(5)
1376–1400	0	0	0		0	1	1
1401–25	1	3	1	0	0	2	7
1426–50	1	2	3	7	0	4	17
1451–75	2	5	5	2	5	2	21
1476–1500	12	13	12	6	4	10	57 (43)
1501–25	25	31	23	14	19	21	133 (110)
1526–50	37	30	31	12	18	8	136 (110)
1551–75	16	22	30	7	8	2	85 (72)
1576–1600	10	12	19	14	4	1	60 (48)
1601–25	13	8	6	12	4	1	44 (34)
1626–50	4	12	3	4	10	3	36 (30)
1651–75	0	0	0	0	0	1	1 (0)
Total: Identified *nāyakas*	123	139	134	78	72	60	606 (498)
Total: All occurrences	163	223	279	131	154	80	1030

Source: Karashima 2002: 15.

Note: * The figure in parentheses in the Totals column is that obtained after identifying the *nāyakas* appearing in different districts and reflects therefore the actual number for the whole of Tamil Nadu. As for the abbreviations, Cg stands for Chingleput, NA and SA for North Arcot and South Arcot respectively, TT for Thanjavur and Tiruchirappalli districts combined, S for the southern districts of Pudukkottai, Ramanathapuram, Madurai, and Tirunelveli, and W for the western districts of Dharmapuri, Salem, and Coimbatore.

armed contingent of a certain size for the king, apart from carrying out general administration in the territories through his agents.[6]

The number of references to the *nāyakatana* increased from the reign of Krishnadevaraya, which coincides with the increase in the number of *nāyakas*, as seen in Table 6.1, indicating the close relationship between these two. Recent studies[7] have made it clear that the *nāyakas* were transferred from one territory to another under the rule of such powerful kings as Krishnadevaraya and Achutadevaraya, but when the king's power waned, the *nāyakas* seem to have tried to establish their power in the locality one way or another, though the assignment of the *nāyakatana* by the king continued even after his defeat at the battle of Rakshasi-Tangadi in 1565.

Concerning the relationship between the *nāyakas* and king, we know from inscriptions and the statements of Nuniz and also of Domingos Paes, another Portuguese merchant,[8] that the *nāyakas* worked for the king in the palace and also in government, discharging various duties. For example, some of the *nāyakas* are known to have been *mahāmaṇḍalēśvara* (ruler of a large area), *mahāpradāni* (chief minister or governor of a particular area), *rājyam-kartar* (governor of the province), *daḷavāy* (military general), *vāsal* (palace guard), *aḍaippam* (page bearing betel-nuts for the king), *bokkisham* (state accountant), or *kāariyattu-kaḍava* (executor of some duty for the king). If we count the number of *nāyakas* whose duty or status is given, its ratio to the entire group of *nāyakas* in Tamil Nadu will be 20 per cent. Cynthia Talbot also observes *nāyakas*' participation in the state administration.[9]

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[6] In inscriptions there appear many agents designated as *kartarāna* or *kaḍava* working for the *nāyaka* in his territory. Sometimes they are themselves *nāyakas* subordinate to superior *nāyakas*. Talbot wonders whether or not small *nāyakas* who were given one or two villages also had the obligation to keep troops for the king or his superior *nāyaka* (Talbot 2001: 262). Further studies will be required on this point.

[7] The works of N. Ota and Karashima (see Karashima 2002: 24).

[8] The chronicles of Domingos Paes and Fernao Nuniz were translated into English by Robert Sewell in Sewell 1900 and the translations are reproduced with fresh notes in Filliozat 1977.

The above clearly shows that the *nāyakas* were not local powers, but were directly involved in the state administration under the king's command, though they served as military leaders at the same time. This is also testified by the fact that there are many inscriptions that reveal the *nāyaka*'s desire to be acknowledged by, or to have direct access to, the king by drawing his attention through charitable deeds. For example, a Devikapuram inscription (*ARE* 1912, 358: CE 1518), records Arihara Nayaka's assigning of cowherds who lived in his *sirmai* (*nāyakatana*) to the Devikapuram temple. The inscription states that this grant was made to enable the king and Tirumalai Nayaka (Arihara Nayaka's superior) to earn religious merit (*puṇṇiyam*) and must have been a way of expressing 'fidelity' to the king (or one's superior). This is another sure indication of the nature of the political relationship between the Vijayanagar *nāyakas* and the king.[10]

The Devikapuram inscription cited in the foregoing account also reveals the relationship between Tirumalai Nayaka and Arihara Nayaka. There were many Tirumalai Nayakas who figured in sixteenth-century inscriptions and we are not sure which Tirumalai this *nāyaka* was. However, a Nagalapuram inscription (*SII* xvii, 684) in 1524 mentions a Tirumalai Nayaka who was the governor of Padaividu-rajiyam, to which Devikapuram belonged. Since Arihara is known from the inscription cited above as a member of the *nāyakapāḍi* (regiment of *nāyakas*) stationed in the Padaividu area, it is almost certain that Arihara gave religious merit to this governor, Tirumalai who was his superior. There are some inscriptions that record a big *nāyaka* assigning a part of his *nāyakatana* to a subordinate *nāyaka* working as his agent, indicating the practice of subinfeudation. The governor, Tirumalai Nayaka, might have assigned Arihara Nayaka his *sīrmai.*

There is no doubt that the *nāyakas* played a crucial role in the state's revenue collection. There are a large number of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century inscriptions recording the remission of *paṭṭaḍai-nūlāyam* (tax on artisan's workshop), *kāṇikkai* (present/contribution) and other taxes by *nāyakas* in favour of artisans, merchants, and cultivators. The Tamil Nadu inscriptions provide us with 631 tax terms, and those in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh yield 556 and 260 tax terms respectively (Karashima et al. 1993). From their topographical and chronological distributions, we understand that *kāṇikkai* and *sunkalsungam* (customs) were the most important taxes levied by Vijayanagar state, as they appear in all the three regions and throughout the sub-periods of Vijayanagar rule.

In Vijayanagar, however, we may discern three different levels of tax-levying authority, namely the king, the *nāyakas*, and the *nāṭṭavars*. Though it is no easy task to categorize all individual taxes into groups according to these authority levels, *jōḍi* and *sūlavari* can be categorized as the taxes at the king's level, for it was the king who mostly remitted them.

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[9] Talbot 2001. Besides the *nāyakas*' participation, she notes the patrimonial character of the Vijayanagar rule over a particular period (p. 260).

[10] N. Venkataramanayya denies similarity between the *nāyankara* system and feudalism in medieval Western Europe on the grounds that the *nāyankara* system lacked subinfeudation among *nāyakas* and fealty to the overlord expressed by subordinate *nāyakas*, which were both characteristic of European feudalism (Venkataramanayya 1935: 171 and 174).

Likewise, *paṭṭaḍai-nūlāyam* and *kāṇikkai,* which the *nāyaka*s mostly remitted without any reference to the king can be categorized as the taxes belonging at the *nāyaka* level, though there are some cases in which *nāyaka*s asked the king for permission to remit or gave religious merit to the king in their remission of the tax. *Nāṭṭu-viniyōgam*, *nāṭṭu-kāṇikkai*, and so on, the taxes relating to the *nāḍu* organization, may be categorized as belonging at the *nāṭṭavar* level.

Despite the existence of these different levels of tax-levying authorities, the *nāyaka*s seem to have handled or been involved at all levels. Many inscriptions reveal that the king instructed *nāyaka*s to remit *jōḍi* and *sūlavari* imposed on temples. On the other hand, there are several sixteenth-century inscriptions in South Arcot district in which *nāṭṭavar*s abolished the tax that former *nāṭṭavar*s had imposed on the Kanmala community and swore to the *nāyaka* and his agent in the locality, and also to the king, to abide by their decision (Karashima 1992: 163).

We may assume from the above that the king had detailed knowledge of the revenue in each *nāyaka*'s territory. In fact, we have some direct evidence supporting this view. A Sitteri inscription (*ARE* 1943, 98: CE 1548) records that King Sadasivadevaraya sent an accountant to Surappa Nayaka's territory in North Arcot district to remit the king's portion of the taxes paid by the people to Surappa Nayaka's palace. The text can also be interpreted as meaning that the king relinquished the tax to be paid to the king's palace by Surappa Nayaka. Either interpretation, however, affords us the opportunity to say that the king was well informed about taxation in the *nāyaka*s' territories.[11]

The above account may have made it clear that in Vijayanagar there were many *nāyaka*s who were assigned some territory and worked for the state as administrators, and this justifies our description of Vijayanagar as the '*nāyaka* system'. Judging from the number of *nāyaka*s appearing in inscriptions, as seen in Table 6.1, this system functioned from the last quarter of the fifteenth century to the first quarter of the seventeenth. As for the origin of this system, past studies suggested a similar system was practised in the Kakatiya state under Prataparudra II. Recently, however, some scholars, including Wagoner, have sought to seek its origin in the *iqtā* system that had been widely practised in the Islamic world (Wagoner 2000: 318).

Whatever the origin of the administrative system, kings in the heyday of Vijayanagar transferred *nāyaka*s from one territory to another frequently so that they would not grow as local powers, and therefore there existed a tension between the king and the *nāyaka*s under this system. After the defeat in the battle of Rakshasi-Tangadi, however, the *nāyaka*s greatly increased their strength. In some peripheral areas there appeared big *nāyaka*s such as Ikkeri Nayaka on the western coast of the Deccan, and the Thanjavur, Senji, and Madurai Nayakas in Tamil Nadu. The rebellion of some of these *nāyaka*s and the invasion of Bijapur and Golkonda from the north finally ruined Vijayanagar in the middle of the seventeenth century.

6.2.2 Early Polity

Past studies have not paid enough attention to the differences between the Vijayanagar rule of the earlier period, that is, before the advent of the *nāyaka* system towards the end of the fifteenth century, and that of the later period, when the *nāyaka* system became the norm. We shall here examine the Vijayanagar polity in the period prior to the introduction of the *nāyaka* system.

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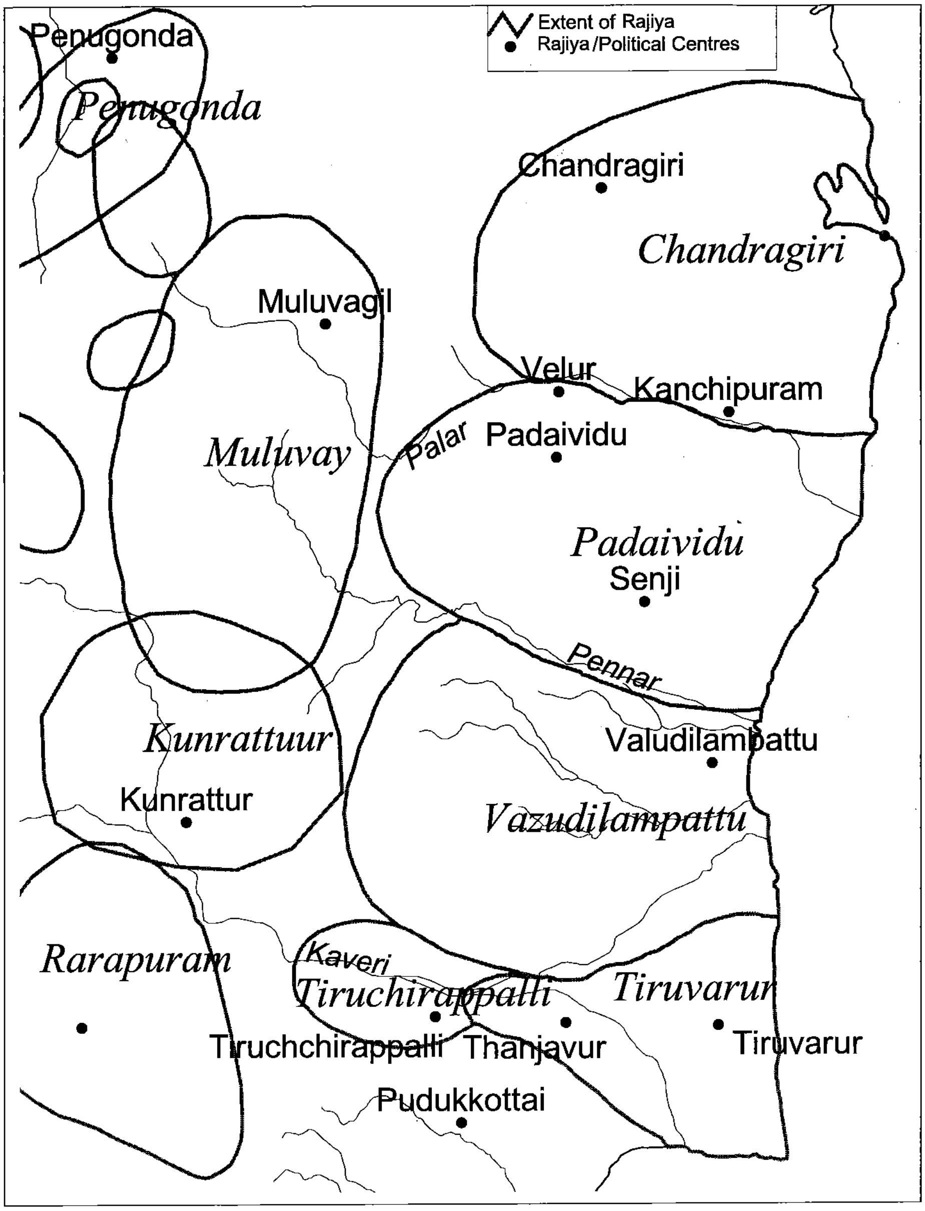
[11] Revenue records called *rāya-rēkhe* are known to have registered tax amounts collected by the Vijayanagar kings from the villages.

For administrative purposes, Vijayanagar state was divided into a number of big territories called *rājyam* (see Map 6.3). During the earlier period, high-ranking officers (often


Extent of Rajiya
● Rajiya/Political Centres
Penugonda
Penugonda
Chandragiri
Chandragiri
Muluvagil
Muluvay
Palar
Velur
Kanchipuram
Padaividu
Padaividu
Senji
Pennar
Kunrattuur
Valudilampattu
Kunrattur
Vazudilampattu
Rarapuram
Kaveri
Tiruchirappalli
Tiruvarur
Tiruchchirappalli
Thanjavur
Tiruvarur
Pudukkottai

Map 6.3 Administrative Divisions (*Rājyam/Uchāvaḍi*) in the South-Eastern Part of the Vijayanagar Empire
Source: Karashima 1992.

members of the royal family members) were in charge of these *rājyams*, and administered the state with the help of subordinate officers called *adikāris* who were in most cases army personnel. The high-ranking officers, who were called *mahāmaṇḍalēśvara*, *pradāni*, *mantri*, or *rājyam-karta*, seem to have been stationed in the headquarters (called *chāvaḍi*/*uchāvaḍi*) of one *rājyam* or another for a short period,[12] leaving the actual administration to *adikāris*.

As a result of this rather free, unsupervised position, the *adikāris*, many Tamil Nadu inscriptions reveal, oppressed the people through arbitrary taxation. In 1429, people organized as *valangai*/*iḍangai* arose in open revolt against the maladministration of the government and oppression by the landlords.

This is confirmed by two sets of inscriptions that are mutually related. The first includes a Tevur inscription (*SII*, xvii, 562: Tj) of 1426 recording the order of Periya Sirupparasar issued to the *nāṭṭavar* of Tiruvarur-uchavaḍi, a *rājya*. It reveals the trouble afflicting the people of the *nāḍu*, caused by *adikārigaḷ* (officers) who harassed the people of the *valangai*/*iḍangai* by imposing a new poll tax on them. It appears that the *adikāris* farmed out the region for the collection of this tax by putting it up for competitive bidding, which hiked the quantum of the tax from 200 to 2,000 *paṇam* in the course of fifteen years. Though this inscription is incomplete, it is inferred that Sirupparasar, a superior administrator probably in charge of Cholamandalam, tried to relieve the burden on the people (Karashima 1992: 67). There are many inscriptions recording the distress caused by revenue farming in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The revolt of the people of the *valanga* *iḍangai* that took place in 1429 in the Vellar an Kaveri/Kollidam valleys is recorded in a secon set of inscriptions from Aduthurai, Elavanasu Korukkai, Tiruvaigavur, and other places (se Map 6.4). The main body resisting oppressio by those it identified as Vijayanagar governmen officers (*irājagarattār*), military people (Vanniyar), holders of official tenures (*jīvitakkārar*) and Brahmana and Vellala landholders acting i 'collusion' with the government was formed b *valangai*/*iḍangai* organizations composed of various (98 indicative) communities (*jātis*) of artisans, cultivators, and merchants, though there are some differences among the groups which assembled from place to place of the revolt.

The four inscriptions from Aduturai (*ARE* 1913, 34), Kil-paluvur (*ARE* 1926, 253), Vriddhachalam (*ARE* 1918, 92), and Pennadam (*ARE* 1929, 246) bear the same date and almost the same contents, which are summarized as follows:

> We, the people belonging to Valangai 98 and Iḍangai 98 of Vaḷudilampaṭṭu-uchāvaḍi,[13] assembled in this temple in full strength and let the following be engraved on the wall of the temple. In this *maṇḍalam* (Valudilampattu), even if the *uchāvaḍi pradhāni* (the local Vijayanagar governor), Vanniyar (military people) and *jīvitakkārar* (holders of official tenure) coerce us, or the Brahmana and Vellala *kāṇiyāḷar* (landholders) try to oppress us in collusion with the *irājagarattār* (government officers), we shall never submit to such oppression. If there appears any single person among us who helps the intruders, betrays us, violates the grant given by Chikkarasar,[14] or destroys the (current) measuring rod, we shall assemble

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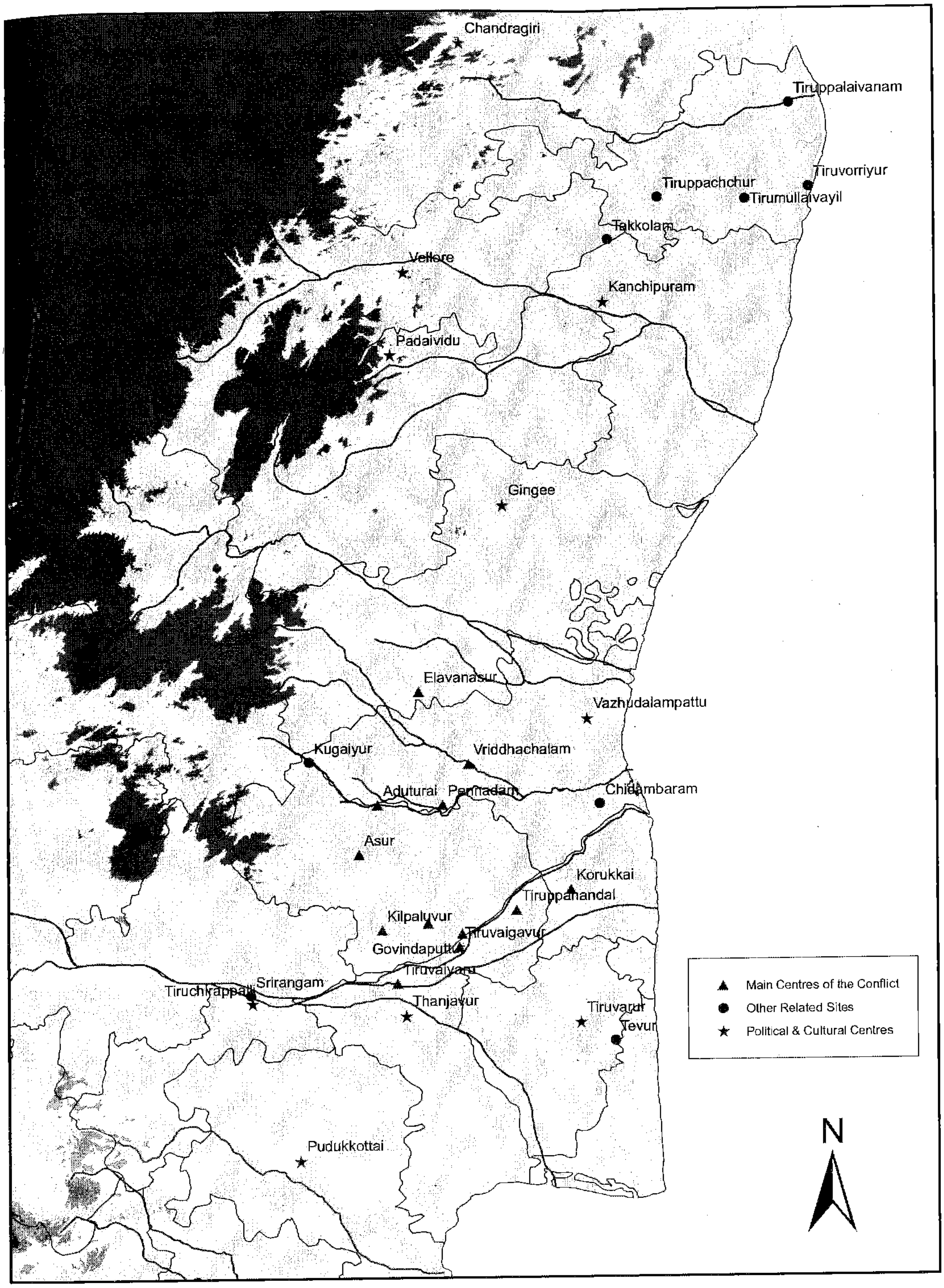
[12] Senior administrators of this time seem to have been transferred from one place to another so as to restrict their charge of a locality to a short duration (Karashima 1992: 67).

[13] Valudilampattu was a large plain between the Pennai River in the north and the Kollidam in the south.

[14] Chikkarasar might have been the same as Chikkadevar appearing in the Tevur inscription mentioned earlier and is said to have protected the people there from arbitrary taxation (Karashima 1992: 148).

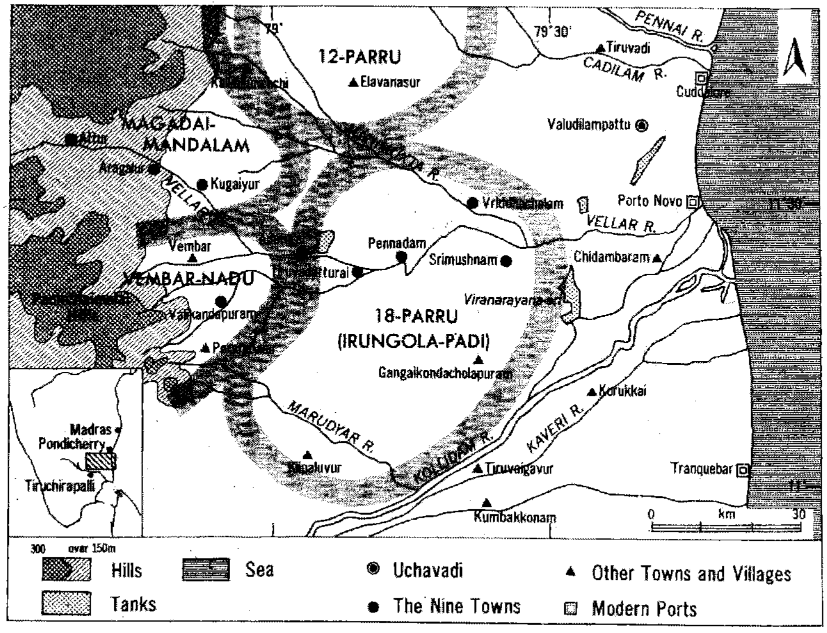

Chandragiri
Tiruppalaivanam
Tiruvorriyur
Tiruppachchur
Tirumullaivayil
Takkolam
Vellore
Kanchipuram
Padaividu
Gingee
Elavanasur
Vazhudalampattu
Kugaiyur
Vriddhachalam
Adutural
Pennadam
Chidambaram
Asur
Korukkai
Tiruppanandal
Kilpaluvur
Tiruvaigavur
Govindaputtur
Tiruvaiyaru
Tiruchirappalli
Srirangam
Thanjavur
Tiruvarur
Tevur
Pudukkottai
▲ Main Centres of the Conflict
● Other Related Sites
★ Political & Cultural Centres
N

Map 6.4 Places of 1429 Revolt
Source: Karashima 1992: 140.

> as of today and enquire into it. Among those who were born in this *maṇḍalam*, no one should write accounts (for the government), let others write the accounts or collude with the government officers and *jīvitakkārars*. If there appears one such person, we shall degrade him in the caste hierarchy.

From these two sets of inscriptions, it is clear that the people of the Tamil country, especially those of the lower social stratum, suffered greatly under the arbitrary and oppressive administration of the Vijayanagar army in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The conflict between landlords and cultivators further increased their misery. Though we have no information on what happened to the people after this revolt, there are some fifteenth-century inscriptions from the upper Vellar valley that record tax remission by early *nāyakas* in response to appeals by the *nāṭṭavars* (see Map 6.5). There are, however, fewer such records from the sixteenth century but the *nāyakas* seem to have given tax concessions to artisans and merchants to boost trade and industry in their assigned territory (*nāyakatana-sīma*).

Inscriptions from the middle Vellar valley reveal the replacement of the former local chiefs by *nāyakas* from Karnataka or Andhra Pradesh towards the end of the fifteenth century. While the inscriptions of the fifteenth century record certain joint decisions by *nāṭṭavars* and the *tandirimārs* (Pallis/Vanniyar) led by Kachchirayar, those of the sixteenth century and after record decisions taken by *nāṭṭavars* and Kannadiga or Telugu *nāyakas* together. The Kachchirayars, who had been powerful in the fifteenth century, saw their political power clipped by the Vijayanagar *nāyakas* (Karashima 1992: 56). The *nāṭṭavars* of the sixteenth century included Reddis, Vanniyars,[15] Mudaliars, and Pillais. Though the Pillais seemed to have formed a new community, branching off from the earlier Vellalas, the composition of the *nāṭṭavars* was quite different from the solely Vellala


79°
79°30'
12-PARRU
Elavanasur
PENNAI R.
Tiruvadi
CADILAM R.
Cuddalore
MAGADAI-MANDALAM
Aragalur
Kugaiyur
VELLAR R.
Valudilampattu
Porto Novo
11°30'
Vembar
VEMBAR-NADU
Pennadam
Srimushnam
Chidambaram
Viranarayana-eri
18-PARRU
(IRUNGOLA-PADI)
Gangaikondacholapuram
Korukkai
MARUDYAR R.
KOLLIDAM R.
KAVERI R.
Tiruvaigavur
Tranquebar
11°
Kumbakkonam
0 km 30
Madras
Pondicherry
Tiruchirapalli
300 over 150m
Hills
Sea
Tanks
Uchavadi
The Nine Towns
Other Towns and Villages
Modern Ports

Map 6.5 The Vellar Valley during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries
Source: Karashima 1992: 44.

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[15] These Vanniyar appearing as *nāṭṭavar* in the sixteenth-century inscriptions may have included some former Kachchirayars.

characteristic of the Chola period. As already stated in section 5.2, the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were the period when many new *jātis* were formed and the composition of *nāṭṭavars* of the Vijayanagar period reflects the social change occurred in the preceding centuries and indicates the increase of power by some of these new *jātis*.

Table 6.1 shows the increase in the number of *nāyakas* appearing in Vijayanagar inscriptions from the last quarter of the fifteenth century and a large number in the first half of the sixteenth, and therefore we may say that the *nāyaka* system that the Saluva dynasty introduced attained its mature form under the Tuluva dynasty, and that it continued to function under the Aravidu dynasty. Anyway, the Saluva period marked the transition in the Vijayanagar polity from the early system to the *nāyaka* system that brought a new social formation to south India. A similar difference between the Sangama and Tuluva/Aravidu dynasties of Vijayanagar in Andhra Pradesh has been noted by Talbot (Talbot 2001: 256).

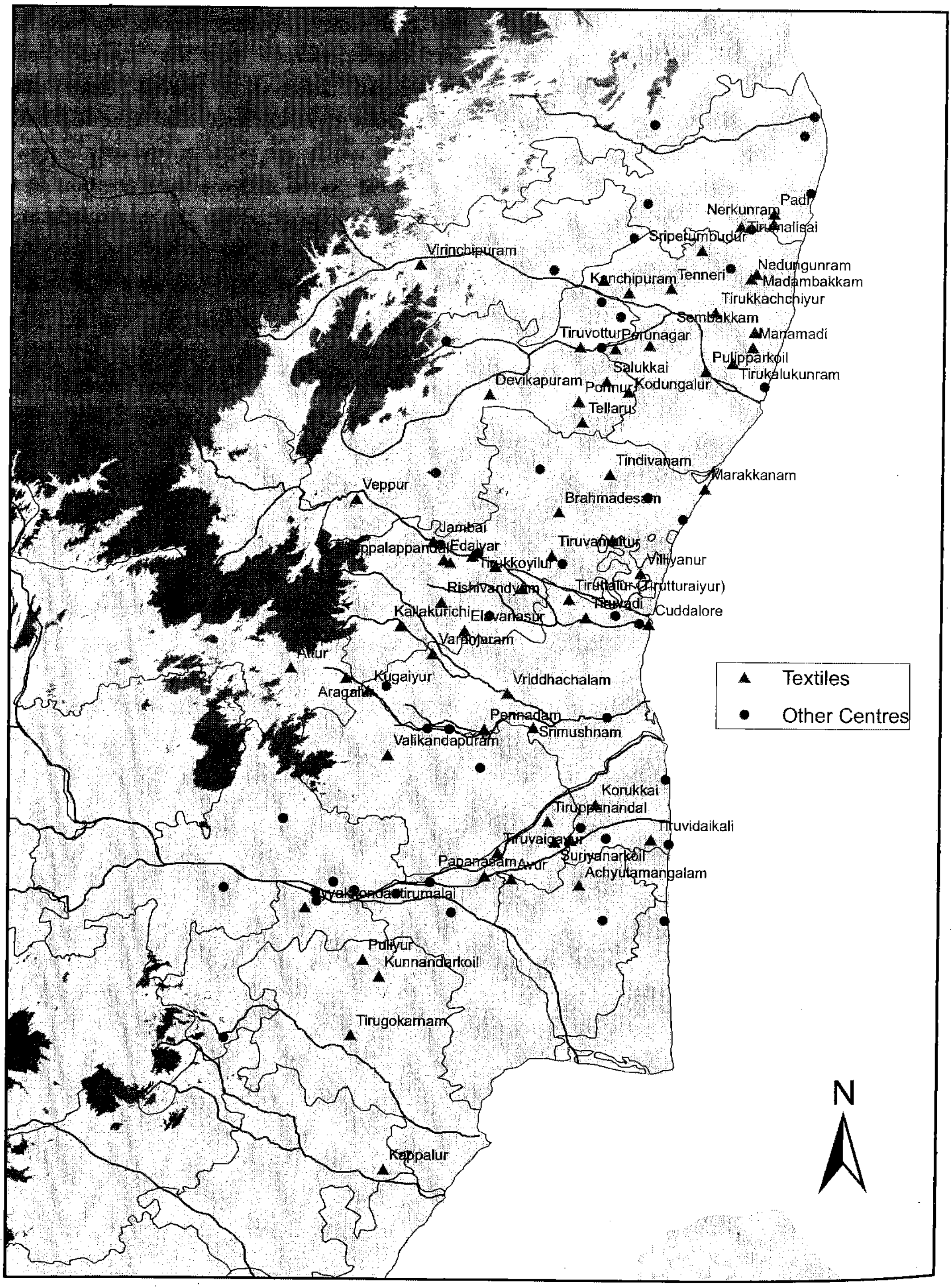
6.3 DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

NOBORU KARASHIMA

The development of trade and industry in multiple localities is one thing that particularly strikes us when we read the Vijayanagar inscriptions. The frequent references to such terms as *paṭṭaḍai* (artisan's workshop), *taṟi* (tax on looms), *pēṭṭai* (market), *kāsāya-kuḍi* (people who pay *āyam* tax in cash), Kaikkolas (weavers), Vaniyas (merchants), Kanmalas (smiths, carpenters, and masons), and so on, are testimony to this phenomenon that seems to have started in the fourteenth century, or even earlier. A Tiruvannainallur inscription (*ARE* 1921, 454: SA, CE 1350) records Sambuvaraya's tax remission in favour of *kāsāya-vargam* (the same as *kāsāya-kuḍi*) composed of Settis (merchants), Kaikkolas (weavers), Vaniyar (oil merchants), *sēnai-angāḍigaḷ* (betel-leaf sellers), and *kōyil-angāḍigaḷ* (temple merchants). There are many inscriptions in which *nāyakas* exempted people living on *paṭṭaḍai* from the *paṭṭaḍai-nūlāyam* tax paid in cash (Shanmugam 1989). Among these people we find Kaikkolas, Koliyas (weavers), Settis, *sekku-vāṇiyas* (oil merchants), *ilai-vāṇiyas* (betel-leaf sellers), three groups of Kanmalas, Kollans (blacksmiths), Tachchans (carpenters), and Tattans (goldsmiths), and others.

Privileges were given to some of these communities. There are five fifteenth-century inscriptions in South Arcot district and Pondicherry that record the grant of privileges to the Kaikkolas to use a palanquin and blow a conch on certain occasions. The Kaikkolas of Kanchipuram and other areas who already had been enjoying such privileges helped their brethren in this area get the same privileges from the local agent of the de facto king, Narasa Nayaka (Karashima 1992: 159–69). This clearly shows the increase in importance of the weaving communities due to a brisk demand for cotton cloth in contemporary maritime trade (see Map 6.6).

Similarly, some sixteenth century inscriptions in South Arcot district record, as stated earlier, the remission of certain taxes on the Kanmalas by the *nāṭṭavar* and a *nāyaka*, which shows an increase in the power of the Kanmala community owing to the development of trade and industry. Another instance that indicates the development of trade is a grant of the commission on the pepper trade (*miḷagu-taragu*) due from six localities (*paṟṟu*) along the Vellar river made to a temple by Kondama Nayaka (*ARE* 1913, 348: SA, CE 1582). A Kugaiyur


Padi
Nerkunram
Tirumalisai
Sripetumbudur
Virinchipuram
Kanchipuram
Tenneri
Nedungunram
Madambakkam
Tirukkachchiyur
Sembakkam
Manamadi
Tiruvottur
Perunagar
Pulipparkoil
Salukkai
Tirukalukunram
Devikapuram
Ponnur
Kodungalur
Tellaru
Tindivanam
Marakkanam
Veppur
Brahmadesam
Jambai
Tiruvamattur
ppalappandal
Edaiyar
Tirukkoyilur
Villiyanur
Rishivandyam
Tiruttalur (Tirutturaiyur)
Tiruvadi
Kallakurichi
Elavanasur
Cuddalore
Varanjaram
Attur
Kugaiyur
Aragalur
Vriddhachalam
Pennadam
Srimushnam
Valikandapuram
Korukkai
Tiruppanandal
Tiruvidaikali
Tiruvaigavur
Suriyanarkoil
Papanasam
Avur
Achyutamangalam
Uyyakondantirumalai
Puliyur
Kunnandarkoil
Tirugokarnam
Kappalur
▲ Textiles
● Other Centres
N

Map 6.6 Weaving and Other Production Centres in Tamil Nadu, c. 1350–1600
Source: Based on Shanmugam 1989.

inscription (*ARE* 1918, 103: SA, CE 1482) tells us about the compulsory cultivation of sugar cane in the latter half of the fifteenth century. Sugar was an important export commodity of the time.

Temples played an important role in the development of trade. There are many fifteenth- and sixteenth-century inscriptions that tell us that Kaikkolas and others were often induced by temple authorities or local leaders to work in the *paṭṭaḍai* on the temple precincts (*tirumaḍaiviḷāgam*) or in the temple villages (Mahalingam 1975: 22). Temples were not only the organizers of industry but also big consumers of various goods required for rituals, including local food items as well as precious imported merchandise. A *Tirunāḷ sandai* (market on festival days) organized by big temples attracted a large crowd and benefited both producers and consumers. Temples also gained a lot from such fairs. The one at Tirupati was among the most famous. During the Vijayanagar period many markets (*sandai*, *pēṭṭai*, and so on) were created in various localities; they were especially concentrated in the Padaividu- and Valudilampattu-uchavadis indicating the development of industry and trade in the northern part of Tamil Nadu (Shanmugam 1989).

The *nāyaka*s wanted to develop trade and industry in their territory and, therefore, sought to associate themselves with temples. There are a good number of inscriptions recording tax remissions by *nāyaka*s in favour of temples or donations of lands/villages along with their revenues to temples. A Kanchipuram inscription (*SITI*, 446: CE 1586) records an order of tax (*āyam* and *anuppu*) exemption issued by Achchuttappayya Nayaka on the merchandise brought to the Ekambaranatha temple and to the Kamakshi Amman temple in Kanchipuram. The merchandise stipulated included camphor (*karpūram*), civet (*punugusaṭṭam*), musk (*kastūri*), perfume (*pannir*, rose water), kumkum powder (*kungumappū*), frankincense (*sampurāni*) and two kinds of silk cloth (*salla-pattu* and *pattavali*).

There are also inscriptions that record the appointment of a *nāyaka* as a temple functionary. The best example can be seen in the case of Achyutappa Nayaka who was awarded the policing (*talārikkam*) of more than 38 villages of the Srimushnam temple, a share in the administration of the said temple (*sthānanirvāham*) and the guardianship of the treasury (*tirmēnikkāval*) of the temple, for his donation of many properties, including a village, as well as for his assistance in getting Kondama Nayaka to grant certain privileges to the temple (*SII*, xvi, 294 and 295: both CE 1584).

As for the activities of the artisans and merchants, two Tirukkalukkunram inscriptions provide information. One inscription (*ARE* 1933, 170: CE 1374) records the payment by the Kaikolas living in Tirukkalukkundram of commercial taxes, including *paṭṭaḍainūlāyam*, and the taxes on the cloth taken by them to the port town Pattinam (Sadras) for sale, and on the commodities brought from that town. This indicates that weavers went to the nearby port to sell their cloth and to purchase necessities. The other inscription (*ARE* 1933, 173: CE 1376) provides information on the merchants in Sadras by recording the decision made by *ūravar* (representative residents of the town), corporate merchant bodies called *paradēsigaḷ* (foreign merchants), and *nānādēsigaḷ* (merchants from various places) about their contribution to the worship in and repairs on the hill-temple of Tirukkalukkunram (see Figure 6.4). They decided to assign to the temple a fixed amount of money obtainable through the sale of commodities such as pearls, cloth, oil, and merchandise of various countries, which were taxable by the government.

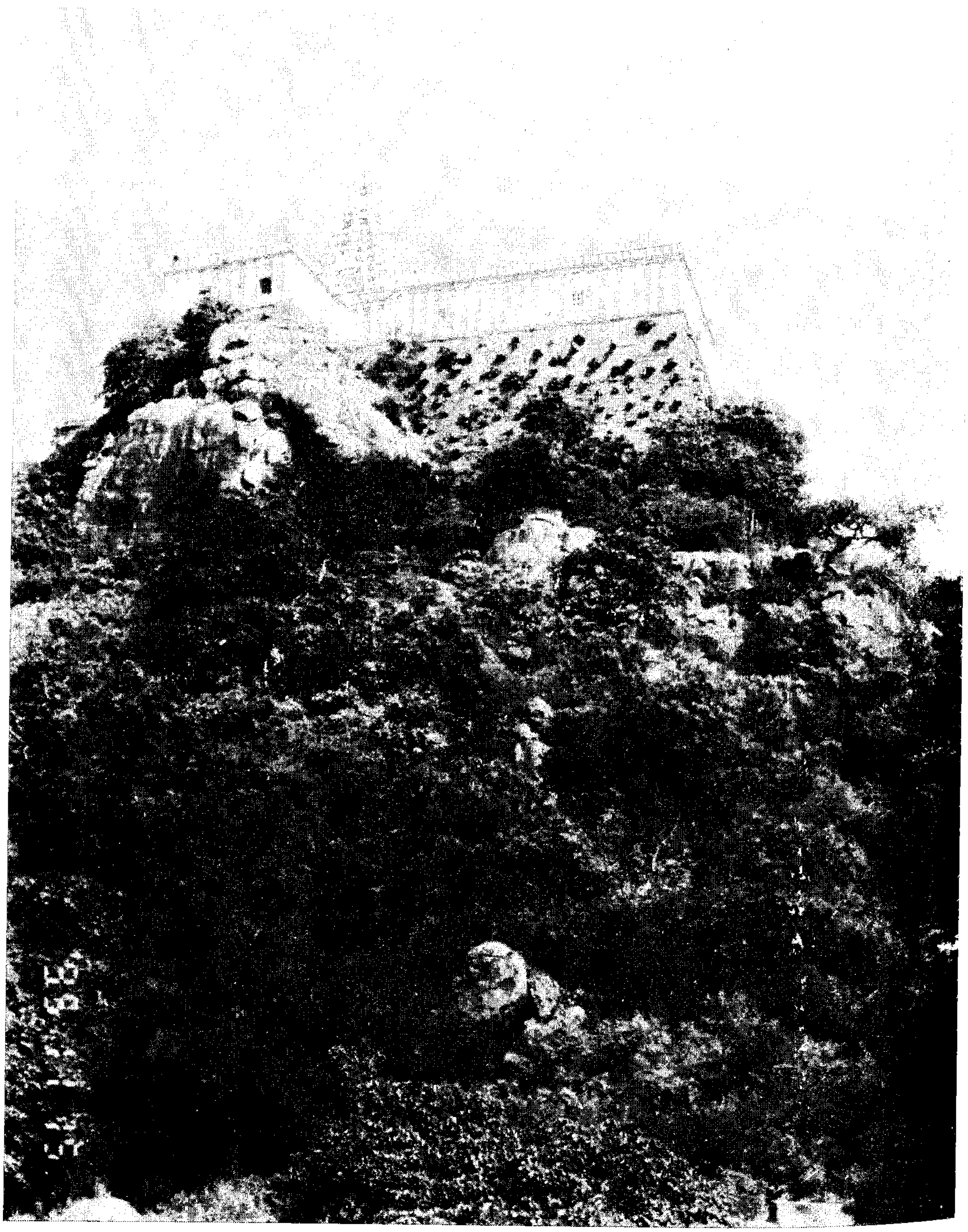


Figure 6.4 Hilltop Temple at Tirukkalukkunram
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

Nagarams (merchant organizations in town) also played an important role. A Nagalapuram inscription (*SII*, xvii, 679: CE 1521) records the decision made by corporate bodies of merchants consisting of *nagarattār* (*nagaram* members) and *paṭṭaṇasvāmigaḷ* (leading merchants of port towns) towards a contribution for a festival in the Kariyamanikka-perumal temple in Harivasapuram (Nagalapuram). The assembled merchants belonged to a large area consisting of Chandragiri-rajyam, Padaividu(-rajyam), Chola-mandalam, and other regions (*pala-maṇḍalam*). A leading merchant body of *Paṭṭaṇasvāmigaḷ* hailed from Palaverkadu (Pulicat). They stipulated that for the temple festival each large house in their town should give one *paṇam*, the second class (smaller) house three-fourths of a *paṇam*, the third class (still smaller) house a half *paṇam*, and so on.

In past studies on the economic conditions of south India, particularly in and after the seventeenth century, historians paid more attention to the effect of growing international trade on the local economy by analysing European records, especially trade statistics, but a recent trend analyses the relations between local merchants and European traders in the regional power structure of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[16] Jeyaseela Stephen has examined the roles played by the Vijayanagar king, *nāyakas*, local commercial communities (Chettis and Marakkars)[17] and the Portuguese in this stage of economic growth of sixteenth-century Coromandel analysing Portuguese as well as epigraphical materials and has characterized it as a phase with an independently functioning commercial world system (Stephen 1997). Sanjay Subrahmanyam takes up for examination Masulipatnam, a port on the Andhra coast, from among the various port towns on the Coromandel Coast during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and argues that its decline started in the latter half of the seventeenth century during the transition from a regional political and economic system based on the link between the inland centre (Golkonda/Hyderabad of the Qutb Shahi Sultanate in this case) and a port (Masulipatnam) to another type of system wherein the port (for example Madras) began to combine both the political administrative and overseas trading roles (Subrahmanyam 1993).[18]

Mention should be made here of the arrival of a Chinese fleet led by Zheng He in the Indian Ocean at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The Chinese records of this mission provide information on the people and products of Kollam, Kochi, and Kozhikode on the Malabar Coast.[19] Pepper seems to have been the most important item of trade for them. Plenty of Chinese ceramic sherds datable to the Vijayanagar period have been discovered in various medieval port sites both on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts (Karashima 2004). Coromandel towns yielding Chinese ceramic sherds include Machilipatnam (Masulipatnam), Kottapatnam, Pulicat, Sadras, and Nagapattinam in the north, and Malabar towns including Kollam, Kodungallur, and Pandalayini-Kollam in the south. In some of them, including Kottapatnam and Kodungallur,

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[16] Past studies may be represented by those of Tapan Raychaudhuri and S. Arasaratnam.

[17] Chettis known as Klings were Hindus, and Marakkars known as Chulias were Muslims. Both traded with Southeast Asian countries too, exporting rice and textiles and importing tin, precious stones, and other merchandise.

[18] He discusses this issue in Subrahmanyam 1990 also.

[19] According to the records, Zheng He erected a stone slab in Kozhikode (Calicut) with a message to commemorate his visit (Mills 1970: 138). Though a similar stone slab was discovered in Galle in Sri Lanka, the one in Kozhikode seems to have been lost. For the Chinese records, see note 23 in section 4.4.

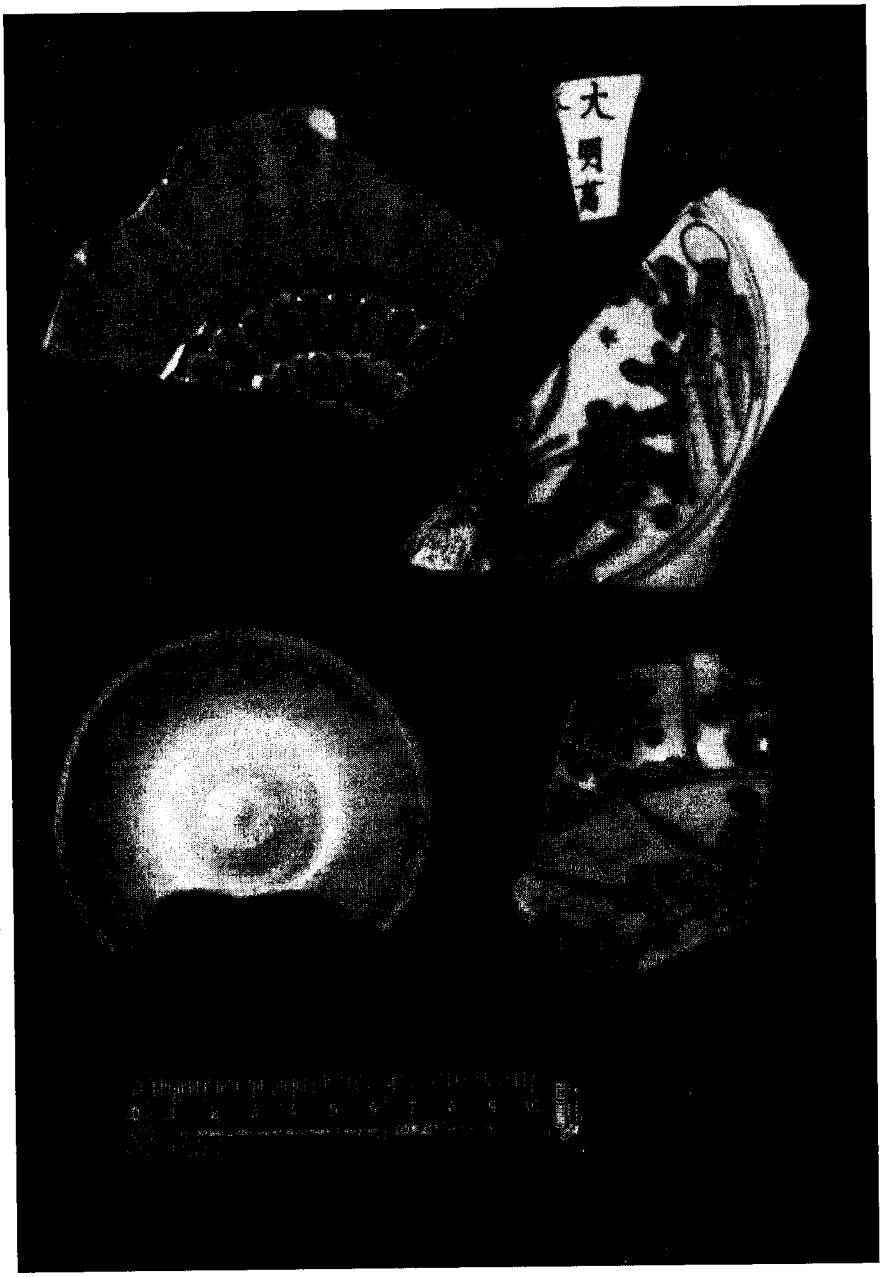

Figure 6.5 Chinese Ceramic Sherds Discovered at Kollam
Source: Courtesy of Yoh Kanazawa.

Thai and Vietnamese ceramic sherds have also been discovered (see Figure 6.5).

A century earlier, in the fourteenth century, Ibn Battuta recorded in his *Travels* that Chinese ships wintered at the port of Pand layini-Kollam, and the *Daoyi zhilue*, a fou teenth-century Chinese work on the countri in Southeast Asia and of the Indian Ocea gives the following description of Shao-gu-nan, a port on the Malabar Coast identifiable with Pandalayini-Kollam.[20].

> Sometimes through stress of weather [Chinese ships] arrive late after the departure of the horse ships [from the west], and without a full cargo; the wind blows too violently or contrarily for them to pass through the Sea of Lambri and to escape the danger from the ragged rocks in the bay of Kao-lan-fu (Colombo) they pass the winter in this place, remaining until the summer of the following year; when in the eighth or ninth month ships come again, then they go on to Gulifo (Kollam) to trade.

These towns functioned as entrepôts of the East–West maritime trade in the Indian Ocean. *Daoyi zhilue* mentions Chinese blue-and-white porcelain as one of the trade items.

On the vicissitudes of maritime trade carried out by south Indian guild merchants such as *ainūrruvar*, see Table 4.4 and the discussion concerned in section 4.4. The activities of European merchants organized in various East India companies is dealt with in section 6.7.

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[20] For *Daoyi zhilue* and Pandalayini-Kollam, see Karashima 2009: 225 and 242.

6.4 'HINDU SULTAN' AND RELIGIONS

NOBORU KARASHIMA

6.4.1 'Hindu Sultan'

The origin of the Vijayanagar state has long been controversial, though the most popular view is the one articulated by Nilakanta Sastri and N. Venkataramanayya. Sastri states:

> Harihara and Bukka belonged to a family of five brothers, all sons of Sangama. They were at first in the service of Prataparudra, but after the Muslim conquest of his kingdom in 1323 they went over to Kampili. When Kampili also fell in 1327, they became prisoners and were carried off to Delhi where they embraced Islam and stood well with the sultan. Now, once again, they were sent to the province of Kampili to take over its administration from Malik Muhammad and to deal with the revolt of the Hindu subjects. What really happened after their arrival in the South does not emerge clearly from the conflicting versions of Muslim historians and Hindu tradition. Both are agreed, however, that the two trusted lieutenants of the sultan very soon gave up Islam and the cause of Delhi, and proceeded to set up an independent Hindu state which soon grew into the powerful empire of Vijayanagara. They started by doing the work of the sultan, their former connection with Anegondi making their task easy, though their Muslim faith set some people against them.... Then, Hindu tradition avers, the brothers met the sage of Vidyaranya and, fired by his teaching, returned to the Hindu fold and accepted the mission of upholding the Hindu cause against Islam.... The two Sangama brothers ... proclaimed their independence, and founded a new city opposite Anegondi on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra to which they gave the significant names Vijayanagara ('City of Victory') and Vidyanagara ('City of Learning'), the second name commemorating the role of Vidyaranya in these momentous events. Here, in the presence of God Virupaksha, Harihara I celebrated his coronation in proper Hindu style on 18 April 1336. (Sastri 1955: 237–9)

This view was based on the records of fourteenth-century Muslim historians[21] referring to the conversion and apostasy of some captives (not specified as Harihara and Bukka); some Hindu stories composed in the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries[22] referring to the captivity of Harihara and Bukka, their being sent back by the Delhi sultan to rule the country, and the meeting with Vidyaranya; and several inscriptions referring to the establishment of the Vijayanagar kingdom in 1336 by the Sangama brothers with the help of Vidyaranya.[23] There are many debatable points in this version, including the identification of the former overlord of the brothers, namely whether they served Kakatiya Prataparudra or Hoysala Ballala III before their captivity in Kampili in 1327, and the date of the commencement of their rule.[24] The most important criticism so far regarding this view has been raised by Phillip B. Wagoner in relation to the present-day communal paradigm of defending Hinduism against Islam. Before taking it up, however, we shall first examine the views of Hermann Kulke, particularly on the role played by Vidyaranya.

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[21] Representative works are Isami, *Futuh al-Salatin* (A. S. Usha, 1948, *Futuhus-Salatin by Isami*, Madras, University of Madras) and Barni, *Ta'rikh-i Firuz-Shahi* (H. M. Elliot and J. Dowson, 1871, *The History of India, as Told by Its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period*, vol. III, London: Trubner, rep. Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1990).

According to Kulke, Vidyaranya, the renowned philosopher, and Saiva sectarian leader Madhavacharya, assumed importance in his relationship with the Vijayanagar royal family only after he became the *mahanta* (*maṭha* head) of Sringeri *maṭha* in 1374–5, in the last stage of Bukka's reign (see Figure 6.6). Kulke insists, therefore, that the story that Harihara and Bukka founded the new state with the advice and help of Vidyaranya, was a 'myth' created only in the sixteenth century when the Sringeri *maṭha* was compelled to counter a severe setback caused by the shift of royal patronage from the Saiva *maṭha* of Sringeri to the Vaishnava temple at Tirupati during the reign of Krishnadevaraya and of Achutadevaraya who were staunch Vaishnavas (Kulke 1985).

Although Wagoner too stresses the point that the story was created in the sixteenth century (Wagoner 2000), he discusses the issue from a much broader perspective, namely the cultural but non-religious Islamization that took place in the south Indian political sphere in the sixteenth century. In the past, the existence of the so-called Indo-Saracenic styles of architecture in the Vijayanagar monuments had been noticed and studied by many scholars, but Wagoner directs our attention to the fact that the Vijayanagar kings and their followers adopted in court, Islamic-inspired long-sleeved tunics called *kabayi* and the high conical caps of brocaded fabric called *kullāyi* by recognizing the prevalence of such couture in the wider world both within and outside the Indian subcontinent (see Figure 6.7).

Another, if not the most important change, is the adoption of the title of *hindurāja-suratrāṇa* meaning 'sultan among the Hindu kings' by the Vijayanagar kings from the middle of the fifteenth century. According to Wagoner, this strange title has nothing to do with religion, but indicates the willingness of the Vijayanagar kings to adopt the political discourse of Islam, in the same way that they adopted Islamic-inspired court dress. They recognized Islam as a powerful

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[22] They are *Rāja-kālanirṇaya, Vidyāraṇya-kālajñāna, Vidyāraṇya-vṛttānta,* and *Vidyāraṇya-śāka.* Extracts from the first two texts are found in Venkataramanayya 1929 and those from the second and third texts are provided with English translations in Sastri and Venkataramanayya 1946. Information on the last is obtainable in the *Annual Report of the Mysore Archaeological Department for the Year 1932.* Wagoner finds only slight differences among these four texts with regard to the Harihara–Bukka episode and provides an English translation of *Vidyāraṇya-kālajñāna* signalling the difference with the other three texts in notes in Wagoner 2000.

[23] The inscriptions that refer to the coronation of Harihara I in 1336 and the name of Vidyaranya in relation with this have been considered forgeries. H. Heras pointed this out in 1929. (Heras 1929; Saletore 1936; Kulke 1985). See note 25.

[24] See the beginning of section 6.1 and also note 23 above.

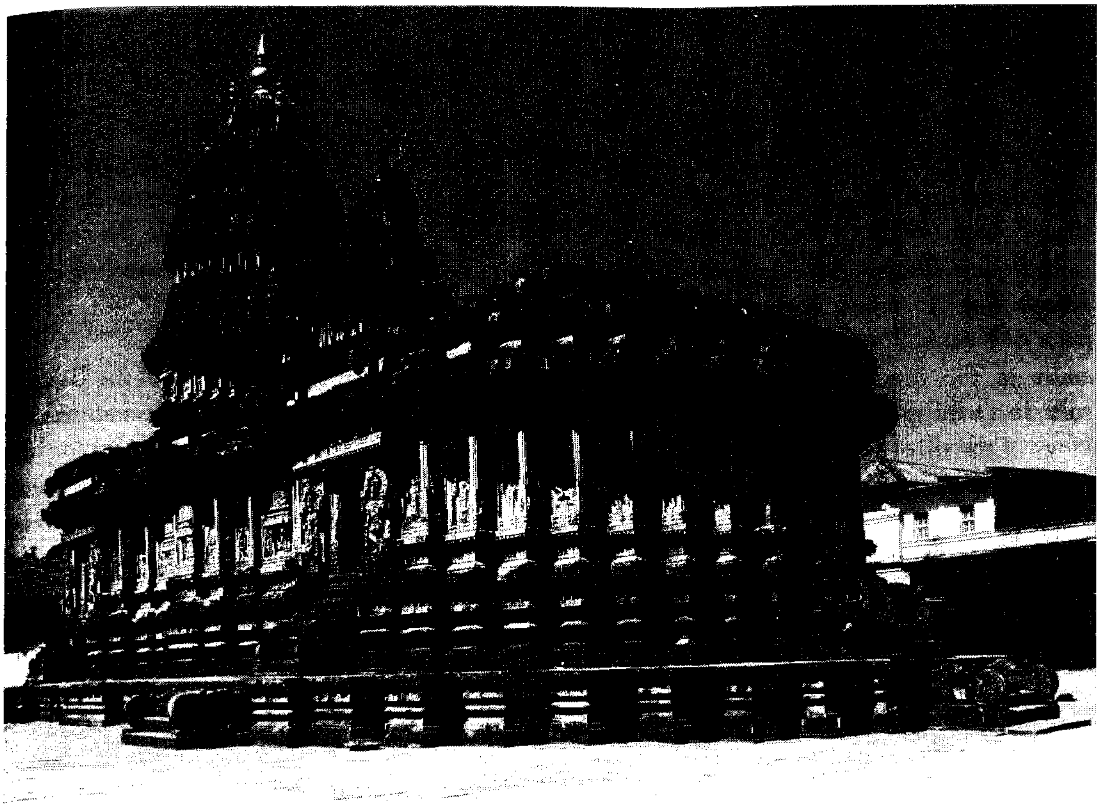

Figure 6.6 Vidyasankara Temple at Sringeri
Source: Courtesy of Takeo Kamiya.

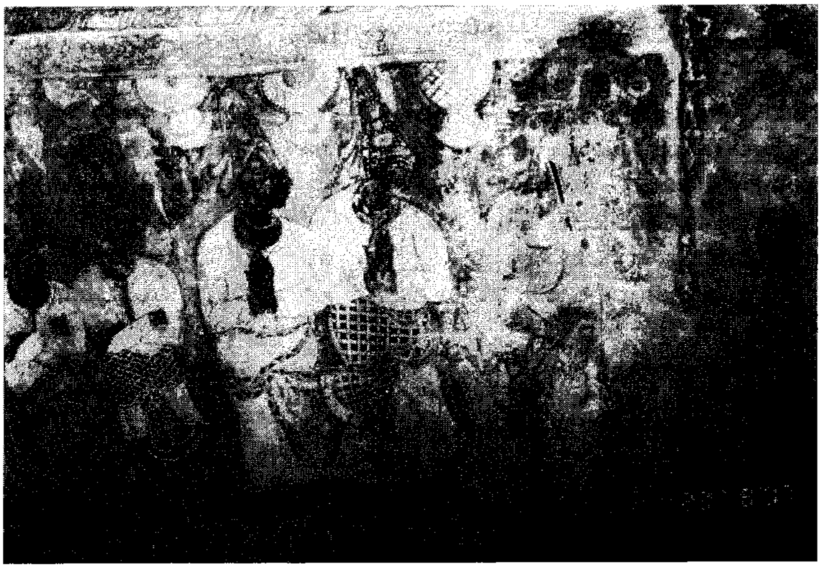

Figure 6.7 Ceiling Painting in Lepakshi Temple Depicting Vijayanagar Court People Wearing *Kabayi* and *Kullāyi*
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

civilization, and were fully aware of the change in the political climate in the wider world, and wanted to be in conformity with the widespread Islamic culture. Devaraya II enlisting Muslim soldiers in his service and erecting a mosque for them in the capital are other examples of such changes in the field of military strategy.

In *Rāyavāchakamu*—a late-sixteenth-century Telugu historiographic text dealing with the reign of Krishnadevaraya and composed in the court of the Madurai Nayaka—the Muslim ruler in Delhi is treated as one of the *dharmic* kings of the three ancient legitimate kingdoms in the Indian subcontinent along with the Hindu rulers of Vijayanagar and the Gajapati kingdom of Orissa. According to Wagoner, this reflects the conception of the political world that the people living in the sixteenth century had. In the pursuit of *dharma,* the difference in religion did not have any meaning.

With this argument, Wagoner interprets the story of the Hindu tradition on the foundation of the Vijayanagar kingdom as showing the legitimization of the rule of Vijayanagar kings by the Delhi sultan who destroyed many kingdoms in the South. Harihara and Bukka were sent back to Karnataka by the Delhi sultan to rule there, and therefore, the real meaning of this story, according to him, is to give to Vijayanagar state the legitimacy as a successor state of the Delhi Sultanate. The Hindu version of the story says nothing about the conversion and apostasy of Harihara and Bukka, though it refers to the help Vidyaranya gave the brothers in fighting against the Hoysala king to establish a new kingdom,[25] and Wagoner states accordingly that the story had nothing to do with religion, and was confined to the sphere of politics.

It is noteworthy that Wagoner drew this conclusion by reading the story as a sixteenth-century narrative free from the present-day communal paradigm and, in that sense, his criticism is of significance to present-day historians.

6.4.2 Religions

In Hampi, on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra River, we find many temples constructed during the Vijayanagar period including the Virupaksha temple. Hosapattana to the south of and adjacent to Hampi was an importan town of the Hoysalas during the last stages o their rule. About the relationship between these two towns, Vasundhara Filliozat writes tha they were twin cities and were integrated late to become Vijayanagara, capital of the Vijayanagar state, during the reign of Bukka I (Fillioza 1988: 182–7).

Abdur Razzak, Ambassador of Sultan Shah Rukh of Persia, who visited Vijayanagar in 1448 described Vijayanagar as follows: 'The city o Bijanagar is such that the pupil of the eye has neve seen a place like it, and the ear of intelligence ha never been informed that there existed anything to equal it in the world. It is built in such a manner that seven citadels and the same number o walls encircle each other' (Major 1858: 23). Many Europeans also visited the city in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and, according to Ludovico d Varthema, an Italian among them who visited th city at the beginning of the sixteenth century, i was 'very large and strongly walled. It is situated on the side of a mountain, and is seven miles in circumference. It has a triple circle of walls' (Jone 1928: 51) (see Map 6.7).

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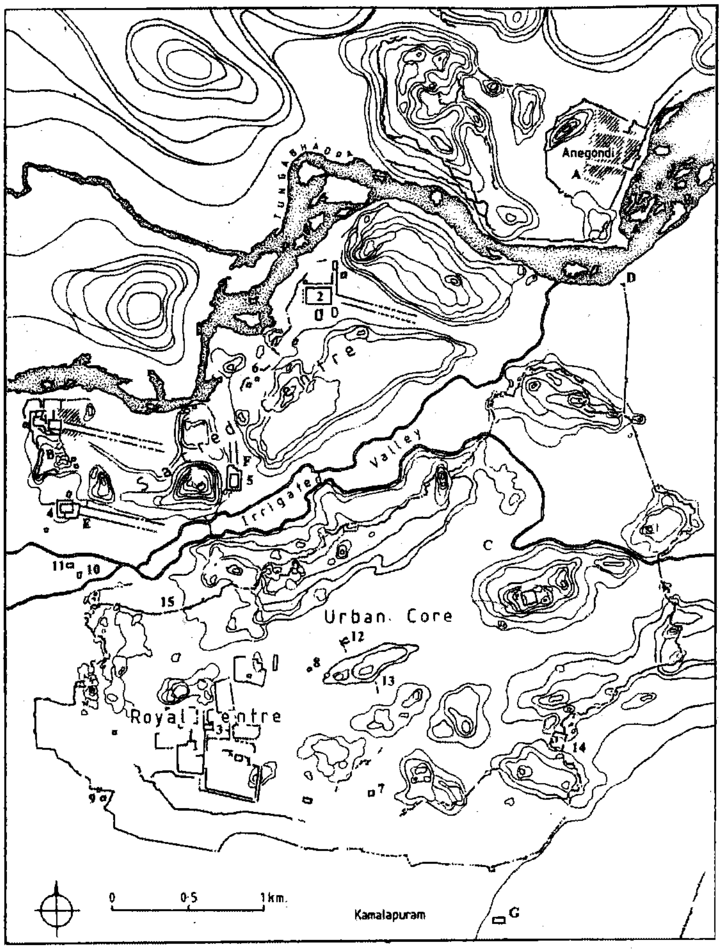
[25] If we take the Hoysala foundation myth, we have to explain this hostility toward the Hoysalas expressed in the sixteenth-century Hindu texts. It is a bit strange, though, that Kulke says those authors might have mistaken Harihara I who was loyal to the Hoysalas for Harihara II who shifted allegiance (Kulke 1985). Fourteenth-century Muslim sources also record that the person sent back from Delhi (identifiable with Harihara I) fought against Ballala III, but this may b understandable as Ballala III actually resisted the Delh sultan's army.


TUNGABHADRA
Anegondi
A
D
Sacred Centre
Irrigated Valley
Urban Core
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Kamalapuram

Vijayanagara City—monuments, landmarks, suburbs, and quarters

Monuments

1. Virupaksa temple
2. Vitthala temple
3. Ramacandra temple
4. Krsna temple
5. Tiruvengalanatha temple
6. Narasimha temple on the south bank
7. Caityalaya of Kunthu Jinanatha
8. Caityalaya of Parsvanatha
9. Temple with the portrait-sculpture of King Mallikarjuna
10. Mudu Viranna temple
11. Tiruvengalanatha (Candikesvara) temple
12. Srngarada Hebbagilu
13. Somararada Bagilu
14. Betekarara Hebbagilu
15. Hodeya Bagilu

Landmarks, suburbs, and quarters

A. Anegondi
B. Hemakuta hill
C. Moorish Quarters
D. Nimbapuram
E. Krsnapura
F. Acyutarayapura
G. Vardadevi-ammana-pattana

Map 6.7 Vijayanagar City Plan

Source: Verghese 2000: 52. Courtesy of Vijayanagara Research Project.

Today, one wall remains encircling the 'royal centre' and 'urban core' area, which is located in the southern part, separated by a narrow agricultural strip along the two streams from the 'sacred centre', which faces the Tungabhadra River in the north. The 'royal centre' comprises the palace structures, audience hall, *mahānavami dibba* (throne platform), Ramachandra (Hazara Rama) temple, *zenana*, and so on, and the 'sacred centre' includes temples to Virupaksha, Achutaraya, Vitthalaswami, and so on, and a big bazaar street with many two-storeyed stone buildings. The development of the city was not haphazard, and the construction must have been planned from the beginning or at a certain stage. However, the plan is not fully in consonance with the Hindu *śāstras* on the lines of which the construction of many Hindu towns was based. Nevertheless, according to John Fritz, the plan of Vijayanagar city follows that of Rama's town depicted in the epic. The Ramachandra temple in the royal centre occupied the actual central place in the planned Rama city. Two important hills were named after Matanga and Malayavanta to symbolise Rama and Hanuman moving through Kiskindha (Fritz 1985).

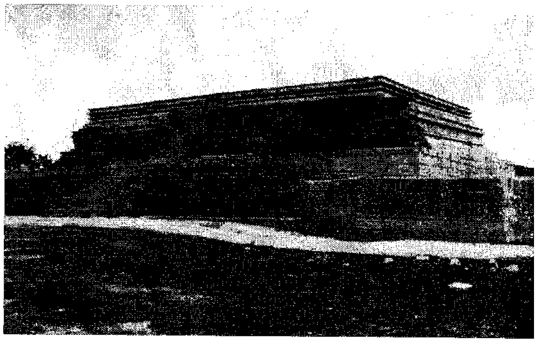

Figure 6.8 Throne Platform (*Mahānavami Dibba*) at Hampi

Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

The 'throne platform' in the royal centre is supposed to have been the platform on which the throne was placed during the *mahānavami* (nine-day) festival (see Figure 6.8). We have vivid descriptions of the festival by Abdur Razzak and by European travellers. *Mahānavami* is the festival for Durga and other goddesses, but the tenth day celebrates the victory of Rama who destroyed Ravana. In Vijayanagar, the kings probably celebrated Rama's victory as their own over their enemies. There were long processions of soldiers, elephants, and the like, and dancing and sports. According to Nuniz and other European travellers, as stated earlier, the *nāyakas* had to attend the ceremony and pay the revenue of their respective territories on this occasion. The *mahānavami* festival, therefore, symbolized the Vijayanagar king's sovereignty, which combined its ritualistic, administrative, and military aspects.

The Vijayanagar kings were very tolerant of all religions and allowed people to embrace Islam and Christianity. Muslims were recruited in the Vijayanagar army and mosques were built for them. However, many of the kings, except those of the Sangama dynasty, were ardent Vaishnavites and were particularly favourable to the Venkatesvara temple in Tirupati. A great many of the over one thousand inscriptions engraved on the walls of temples in Tirumalai/Tirupati[26] are from the Vijayanagar period, recording sixteenth-century royal grants of gold, jewels, revenues from villages, and so on. Tirumalai/Tirupati developed during the Vijayanagar period to become one of the richest temples in south India, with many villages as its property,[27] organizing industry and trade, and attracting a large number of pilgrims from various places. Two temples in the Vijayanagar city, the Virupaksha (Pampapati) and Vittala temples, had some local elements, as the former enshrines the goddess Pampa of the locality[28] and the latter Vithoba who was worshipped in Maharashtra.

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[26] The texts of most of them have been published with English translation in the six volumes of the Tirumalai-Tirupati Devasthānam Epigraphical Series in Madras between 1930 and 1938.

[27] Inscriptions reveal that money donated to the temple was invested in improving irrigation facilities in the temple villages.

As stated earlier, legend has it that Sankara established a Saiva *maṭha* in Sringeri, but his name appears in the inscriptions of Sringeri-matha only from the fourteenth century. The spread of radical Virasaivism in coastal Karnataka during the previous century might have been a cause for this sudden reference to Sankara, the Saiva authority on traditional Vedanta philosophy. In the early sixteenth century, a shift in the king's allegiance from Saivism to Vaishnavism resulted in a crisis among orthodox Saivites and probably promoted the revival of Saivism based on Sankara's doctrine. In the Tamil country also Sankara gained importance during the Vijayanagar period, when orthodox Saivism there was threatened by the rise of the newly established Tamil Saivasiddhantism. The Kamakshi temple in Kanchipuram became the centre for *smārta*s who followed Sankara's *advaita* philosophy.

During the Vijayanagar period, Muslims and Christians also grew in numerical, as well as, social strength. Several Muslim states were established in north Deccan in and after the fourteenth century, as a consequence of which there were Muslim migrations from Persia and Arabia to those states and conversion of the Hindu population to Islam increasing the number of Muslims in the Deccan. We have already noted the conflict between the Persian (Shias) and Deccani (Sunnis) Muslims in the Bahmani court. Many Muslims came and settled in the coastal areas where conversions took place during this period. Particular mention should be made in this connection of the Marakkars or Maraikayars, Muslim seafaring traders, who had settled on the Kerala and Tamil Nadu coasts and adopted the local languages, Malayalam and Tamil respectively.[29] Though legends suggest strong Arab ties indicating migration from those lands, they practised *marumakkattāyam* (matrilineal) marriages prevalent among the Hindus in Kerala. Their activity as local merchants and shipowners who traded in rice and textiles was hampered during the sixteenth century by the Portuguese who were bitterly at odds with them.[30]

The Portuguese came to India in the sixteenth century fired with the missionary zeal of converting heathens to Christianity. To this can be attributed the rise of the Roman Catholic community in south India, particularly in the coastal areas. In Kerala, however, from the early centuries of the first millennium CE there existed an older Christian community usually called Syrian Christian. There are varying accounts of their origin: locals converted to Christianity either by the Apostle St Thomas, who is believed to have come to south India, or by the clergy of the Church of the East, or they might have been descendants of emigrants from Syria.

There are many legends, starting way back in the early centuries of the Common Era, about the evangelical activities of St Thomas in India.

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[28] The Kannada locality name Hampi comes from Pampa.

[29] The appellation Maraikayar may be traced to the term *marakkala-nāyan* seen in the Barus inscription of 1088 (Karashima 2002: 23–4). In Kannada inscriptions of the fifteenth century, the form Marakāla is used.

[30] The Kunjali Marakkars who were admirals of the Zamorin fought against the Portuguese fleet right from their arrival (Menon 1967: 217; Mathew 1988: 186–90).

According to some later accounts, including that of Marco Polo in the thirteenth century and Duarte Barbosa in the sixteenth (Dames 1918: 97–100), St Thomas preached Christianity first on the Malabar Coast and later moved to the Coromandel Coast. In Mylapore (now part of Chennai) he was killed by an arrow shot by a hunter who mistook him for a peacock on a hillock now called St Thomas Mount. In the sixteenth century, the Portuguese built a basilica where he was believed to have been interred at the site of the present-day San Thome in Chennai (see Figure 6.9).[31]

In the sixteenth century, the Portuguese oppressed Syrian Christians by enforcing Roman Catholicism, but after the decline of the Portuguese in the middle of the seventeenth, the Syrian Christians recovered and now form more than 20 per cent of the Christians in Kerala. The Roman Catholics, however, are preponderant, accounting for about 60 per cent.

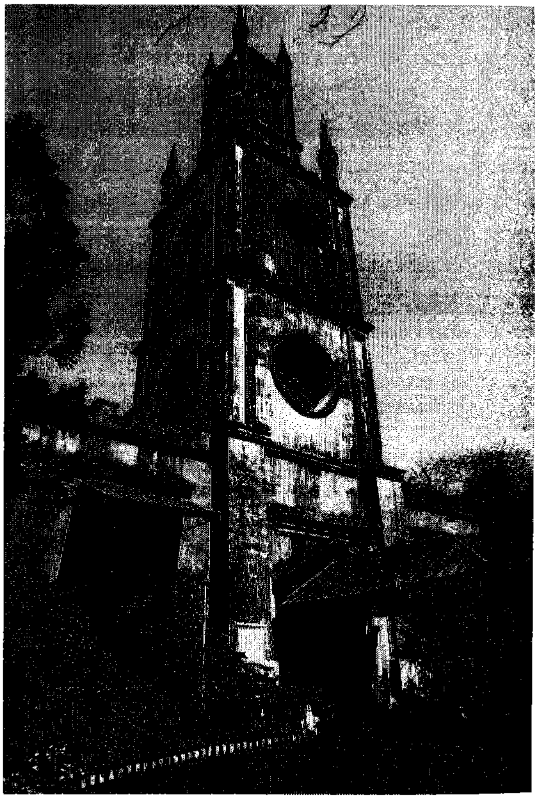

Figure 6.9 San Thome Cathedral in Chennai
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

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[31] In 1893 the British rebuilt it as a cathedral, which is still extant.

6.5 ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE

P. SHANMUGAM

6.5.1 Vijayanagar and *Nāyaka* Architecture

During the Vijayanagara period, elaborate temples were built all over south India. In Andhra, and in parts of Karnataka, granite was a novelty for sculptors, but in the Tamil country and in southern Karnataka, hard granite had been the most widely used medium from the times of the Pallavas. In Karnataka, the earlier Hoysala style of architecture was completely abandoned during the Vijayanagara period and in its place the Tamil form and style in the plan and elevation of temples was adopted (Verghese 2011).

From the very beginning of the Vijayanagar Empire construction of entirely new temples was undertaken over different parts of the empire. Some were built on a simple plan with a small central shrine and a pillared hall. More elaborate and extensive temple complexes were built with Devi shrines and decorated pillared halls, encircled by *prākāras*, and had imposing entrance gateways (*gōpuras*). One significant feature in the construction of temples was the adoption of an additional member in the basement called *upapīṭha* to increase the height of the temple. Towards the beginning of the sixteenth century, ornate plinths were added to the large temples.

Additions to existing temples in the form of pillared halls, outer enclosures with suitable and massive *gōpuras* in the four cardinal directions were also made. Within the enlarged quarters, pillared halls like *kalyāṇamaṇḍapa* and *alankāramaṇḍapa* were built to accommodate large gatherings during various festivals. Some of the temples were provided with large halls usually called 'thousand-pillared'. The pillars were ornately carved with various Puranic and secular themes. One of the striking features of this period was the complicated treatment of pillars by attaching additional pillars to the main pillar. These massive pillars had huge lifelike representations of horse-riding warriors (*yāḻis*) as seen in the Vittala and Virupaksha temples in the Hampi and Srirangam temples (see Figure 6.10). At some places the walls, roofs, and other convenient spaces are also covered with paintings. Sculpted representations, almost in the round, were also introduced during this time in many temples.

Among the several additions, Devi shrines, *kalyāṇamaṇḍapas* and separate shrines for minor deities are also found in the Siva temples. In the Vaishnava temples, separate shrines were provided for Garuda and the *āḻvārs*. Another important add-on was the *uyyālu maṇḍapa* where the deities are placed in a swing during certain important festivals.

The construction of *gōpuras* became a dominant feature from the early sixteenth century in the Vijayanagara temples and new motifs were introduced. In all cardinal directions, the Pandyan style of slender *gōpuras* was adopted. The jambs of the doorway were provided with relief sculptures of the river goddess Ganga or *latāsundari*. The *gōpura* in the Thiruvengalanatha or Achyutaraya temple in Hampi was constructed sometime in 1534. Other significant *gōpuras* are found at Tadipatri in Anantapur district and Vontimitta in Kadapa district, both in Andhra Pradesh (Verghese 2011: 164–80). In the Tamil country, they are found in the Ranganatha temple at Srirangam, Ekambaranatha temple at Kanchipuram and Kariyamanikka-Perumal temple at Nagalapuram. Krishnadevaraya built the northern *gōpura* at Chidambaram on a late Chola basement. Most of the *gōpuras* were constructed on a stone base capped by a brick structure. The stone base in the Tadipatri temple was carved with ornate sculpture and a multitude of figural representations mostly executed in stucco.

In the Karnataka region, the most important works of art of the period were produced in

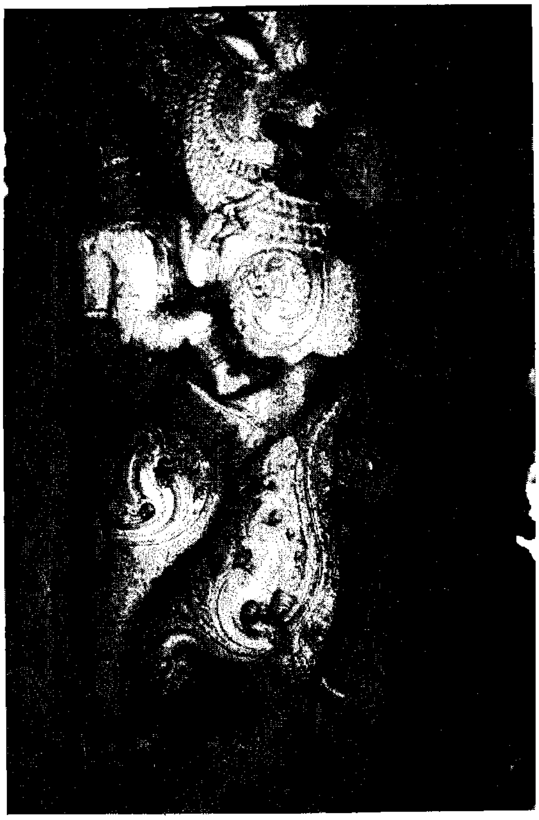

Figure 6.10 *Yāḻi*-Type Pillar in Vittala Temple at Hampi
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

Hampi. The open-pillared hall of the Vittala (Vishnu) temple belonging to the fifteenth century has a number of ornately carved pillars. Other structures of interest include the *kalyāṇamaṇḍapa* and the stone chariot with movable wheels. The Ramachandra (Hazara Rama) temple has a main shrine to the presiding deity and a shrine to the goddess (see Figure 6.11). A *kalyāṇamaṇḍapa* and subsidiary temples are enclosed within the temple complex. The inner walls of the temple are carved with scenes from the *Ramayana*. The Vidyasankara temple at Sringeri in Karnataka is an early temple (1338) of the Vijayanagara period and follows an elliptical plan. The basement and the walls are intricately and beautifully carved.

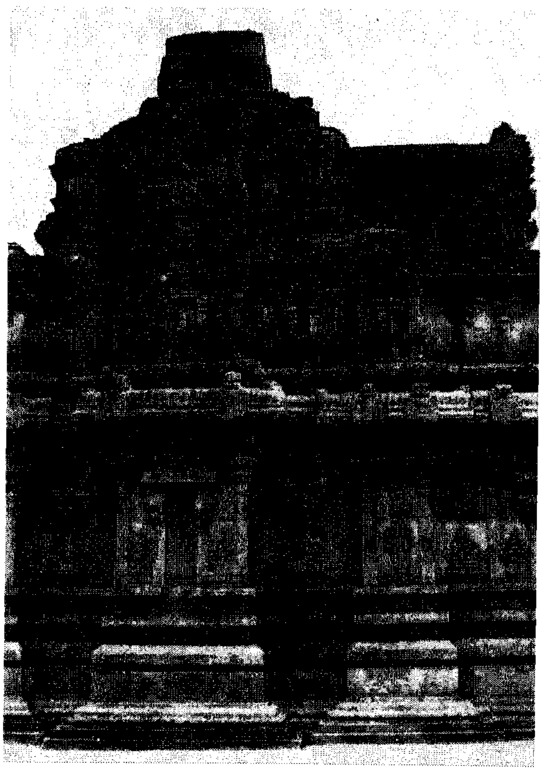

Figure 6.11 Ramachandra (Hazara Rama) Temple at Hampi
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

In Andhra, new temples were built and additions made to existing ones. The Ramesvara temple at Tadipatri and the Virabhadra temple at Lepakshi represent excellent features of the Vijayanagara architecture in Andhra. The *gōpuras* of Tadipatri feature some exquisitely carved sculpture, while fine paintings are to be found in the Lepakshi temple. The latter was constructed in the fifteenth century and some additions were made during the sixteenth. On plan, the temple consists of a central shrine, a front *maṇḍapa*, and a *mahāmaṇḍapa*. It has a two-storeyed *vimāna*. The temple is famous for the exquisitely carved pillars in the *mahāmaṇḍapa*. The paintings in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* testify to the artistic excellence of the period (see Figure 6.12).[32]

Another early example is the Lakshminarasimhasvami temple at Kadiri which, according to a foundation inscription, was constructed in 1352. The temple has a simple plan with a central shrine preceded by a front *maṇḍapa* and *mahāmaṇḍapa*, and a single-tier *vimāna*. A separate shrine to Devi, subsidiary shrines to Anjaneya and Garuda, and *kalyāṇamaṇḍapa* are also provided. All these structures are enclosed in a *prākāra* with four entrance *gōpuras* on cardinal points.

In the Tamil country new temple complexes were built. The most important temples are located in Kanchipuram and Srirangam. The Vijayanagara rulers endowed several temples with *maṇḍapas*. They include the Seshagiri *maṇḍapa* in the Ranganatha temple at Srirangam, and *maṇḍapas* in Ekambranatha and Varadharaja temples at Kanchipuram (see Figure 6.13).

Temple walls were provided with pilasters, niches, and floral motifs like *kumbhapanjaras*. In

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[32] Besides the courtesans in the figure on this page, there are also depicted in these paintings courtiers wearing Islamic-inspired couture. See the previous section (6.4).

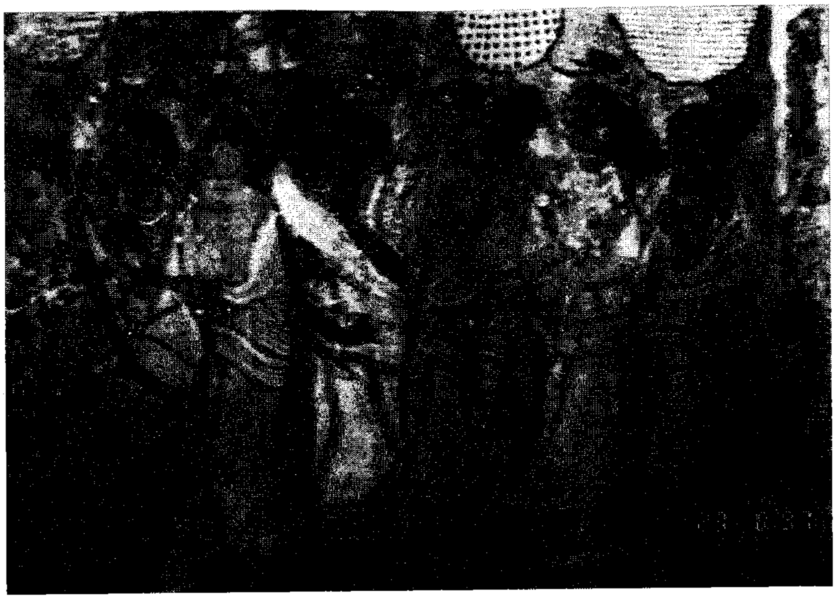

Figure 6.12 Ceiling Painting in Virabhadra Temple at Lepakshi
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

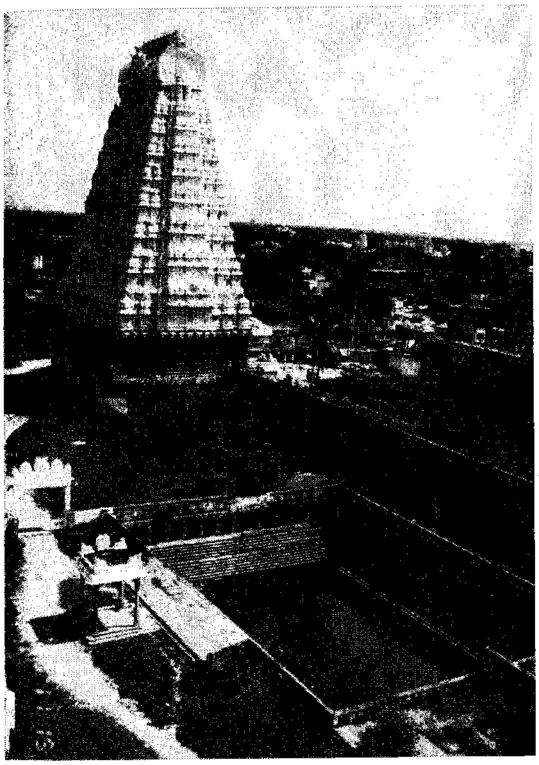

Figure 6.13 Ekambaranatha Temple at Kanchipuram
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

some temples, the walls were provided with panels of sculptures in low relief such as those in the Ramachandra temple at Hampi and the Rama temple at Penugonda. In the Andhra regions, sculpture of this kind is found in the temples of Pushpagiri, Srisailam, and Tadipatri, on most of the pillars in the *maṇḍapas*, and the predominant theme is religious. There are representations of Saiva and Vaishanava deities in various forms. The Vijayanagara artists also sculpted several contemporary social themes. Various dance forms like the stick-dance (*kōlāṭṭam*), musicians, Central Asian dancers, and European horse merchants are also depicted. Sculpting portraits became an important art form during this period. Life-size images of members of the chiefly families and donors were also executed at various places in the temple complex. They are found in the temples at Bhatkal, Vontimitta, Tadipatri, and Sringeri.

In Kerala, a large Siva temple was built in the sixteenth century in Vaikom with a square sanctum within an elliptical columned *maṇḍapa* (see Figure 6.14).

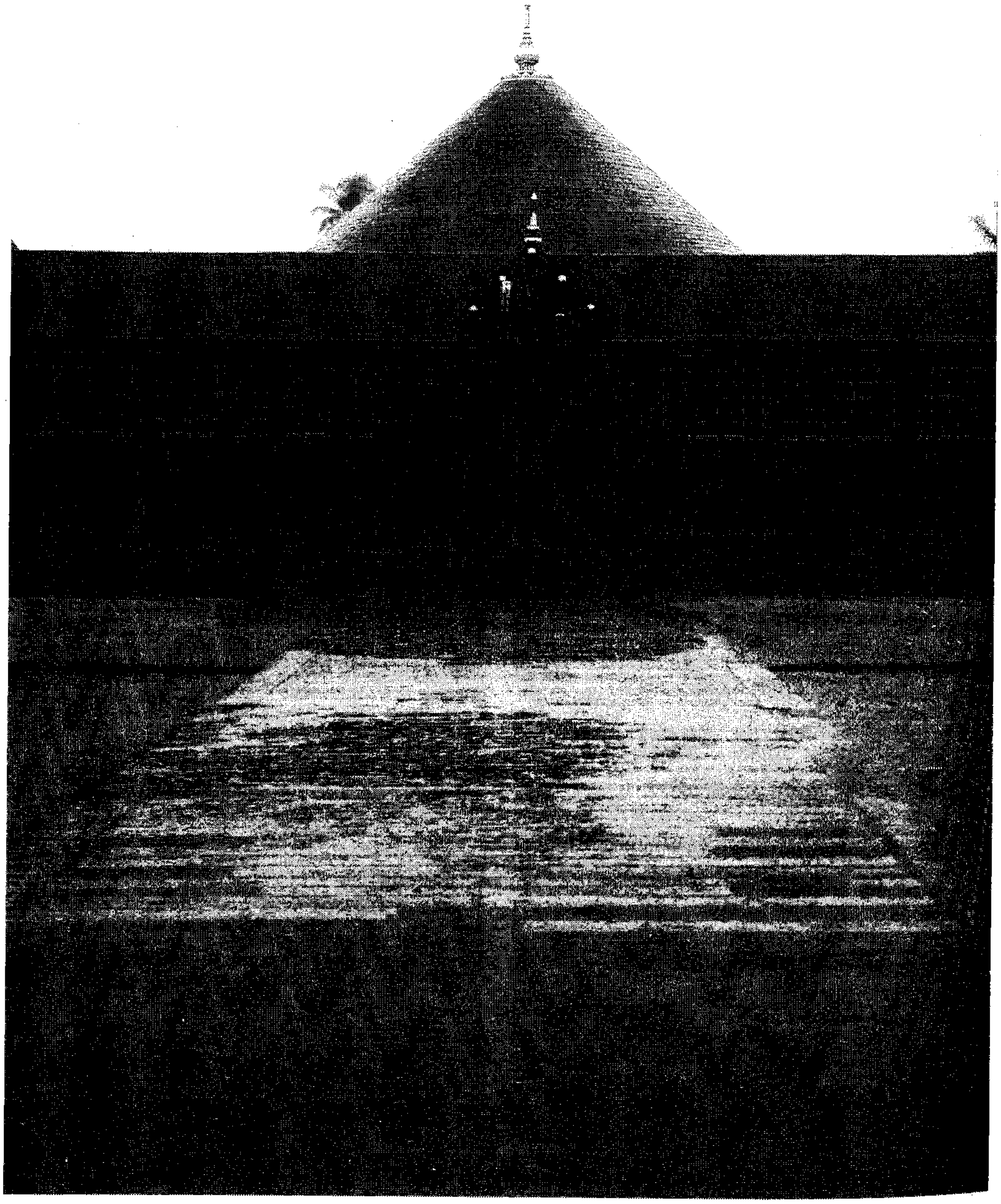

Figure 6.14 Front View of Siva Temple at Vaikom
Source: Courtesy of Takako Karashima.

Nāyaka architecture was an extension of Vijayanagara architecture with limited improvements, but a new feature was the construction of palaces and forts. The *nāyaka*s also added to extant temples thousand-pillared *maṇḍapa*s and high *gōpura*s with elaborate sculpture. The *gōpura*s became a dominant architectural feature and their granite basement developed into an elaborate component. Also, the *gōpura*s assumed a slender appearance and turned taller with the addition of more storeys. The Nayakas of Madurai are credited with the construction at Srivilliputtur of the tallest *gōpura* found anywhere in Tamil Nadu. Most parts of the Minakshi-Sundaresvarar temple at Madurai were also built during the period of the Tirumalai Nayaka. The pillars have images of gods and tribal folk as well as huge sculpture of kings and queens. The temple complex and the *kalyāṇamaṇḍapa* at the Jalagandesvara temple in Vellore and most of the structures at Virinchipuram were the work of the Bommi Nayakas of Vellore. Life-size images of *nāyaka* rulers were sculpted in the round. Ten life-size images of Tirumalai Nayaka and his predecessors with queens alongside are found in the Pudumaṇḍapam at Madurai (see Figure 6.15). Images of *nāyaka*s are also found at Ahobilam and Somapalem temples in Andhra Pradesh. The Nayakas of Gingee in Tamil Nadu constructed the fort complex with temples and palace structures, and those of Ikkeri in Karnataka built some temples in the Chalukyan style. The Aghoresvara temple at Ikkeri is the finest example of *nāyaka* architecture in Karnataka. Other examples include the Ramesvara and Virabhadra temples in Keladi.

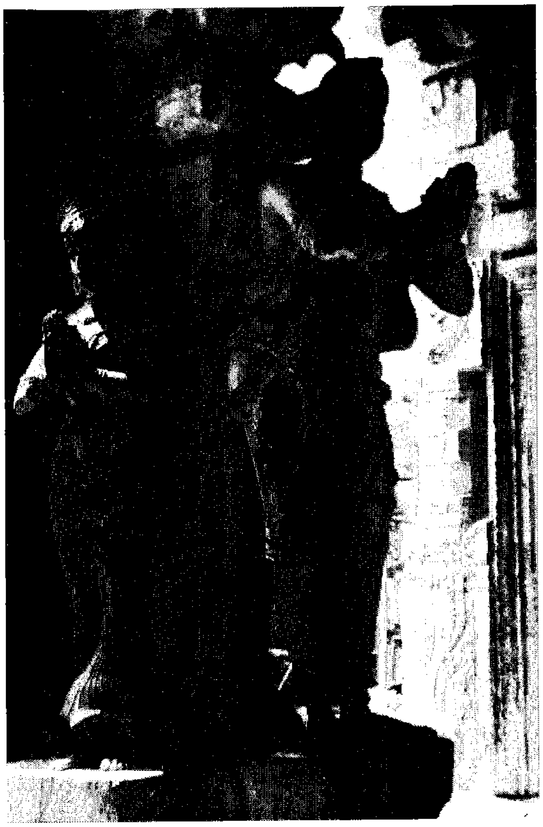

Figure 6.15 Tirumalai Nayaka with His Queen at Madurai

Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

6.5.2 Islamic (Bahmani) and European Architecture

The Bahmani architectural features are mostly distributed in the Bijapur, Bidar, and Gulbarga areas. These cities of the Bahmanis contain monuments like tombs and mosques, besides civic buildings. One of the significant features of the Bahmani architecture is its adoption of the architectural forms of the Delhi Sultanate in its early phase. Later, they accepted some local forms of art as well as the Persian styles. In the Jami Masjid at Daulatabad and the Deval Mosque at Bodhan, there is no semblance of the Bahmani style as they were originally Hindu shrines that were later adapted by the Bahmanis.

The most important structures in the Bahmani period are the tombs and mosques. The earlier tombs at Gulbarga were in the Tughlak style, while in the later ones Hindu and Persian influences can be seen. The later Bahmani tombs at Bidar resembling those at Gulbarga have larger domes that are more bulbous in appearance. They also have façades decorated with arches and screened windows. The tomb of Ahmad Shah Wali is the finest, its interiors adorned with paintings and inscriptions in golden colour. Persian motifs can be seen in the tomb of Ala-ud-din at Daulatabad, where the façade is covered with enamel tiles. The Gol Gumbaz, the tomb of Muhammad Adil Shah at Bijapur, is indeed a striking monument of the period with a large tomb chamber and an imposing dome (see Figure 6.16). Other structures of interest include a mosque and the musicians' gallery.

The construction of mosques also displays a change from a simple to a developed style of architecture exhibiting Persian motifs. The Shah Bazar Masjid at Gulbarga shows the features of Tughlak architecture. Although the Jami Masjid adopted some features of the Persian style, it retained most of the Delhi-style elements. In this structure, squat arches appear for the first time and are thereafter used in most of the buildings of the Bahmanis.

By far the most remarkable building in the Persian style was the Madrasa of Mahmud Gawan in Bidar built in 1472. There are three storeys and two towering minarets in the front corners, and the mosque, the library, and lecture rooms have been constructed with utmost care. It is well decorated with inscriptions from the sacred texts. Another impressive structure, the Mehtar Mahal built in 1620 at Bijapur, is a tall and ornamental gateway to the courtyard of a mosque.

Military architecture was another notable feature of the Bahmani period. Fortresses with battlements and bastions were constructed at places like Gulbarga, Bidar, Golkonda, and Warangal (see Figure 6.17). Some of the fortresses were taken from the local chiefs and were remodeled later exhibiting more of the Bahmani style. European models also seem to have been adopted in the construction of these fortifications.

Islamic influence is also found in the buildings of the Vijayanagar capitals, Hampi and Chandragiri. An interesting example is the elephant stable at Hampi, which has several domes along with *sikhara*-type roofs. Another fine example is the Lotus Mahal, which shows a nice mingling of elements; the tiered pyramidal roof of temple architecture and recessed and foliated arches similar to the Lodi

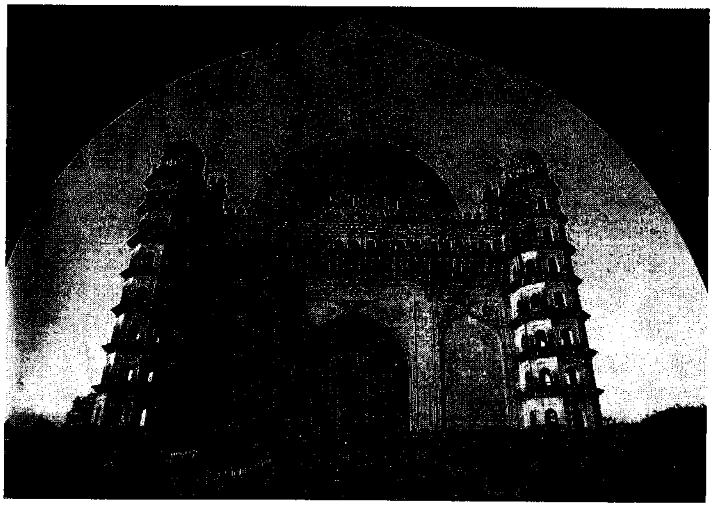

Figure 6.16 Gol Gumbaz at Bijapur
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

Figure 6.17 Golkonda Fort (a Part)
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

tombs of Delhi. Also at Chandragiri are the late-sixteenth-century storeyed palaces (called Raja-mahal and Rani-mahal), which have the prominent pyramidal towers of the Hindu tradition and arcaded façades with a series of Muslim arches (see Figure 6.18).

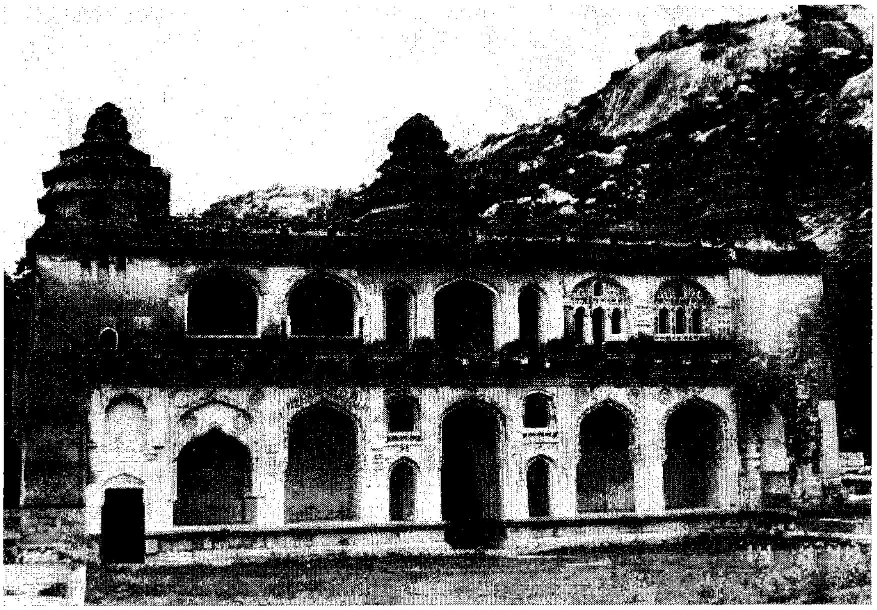

Figure 6.18 Rani Mahal at Chandragiri
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

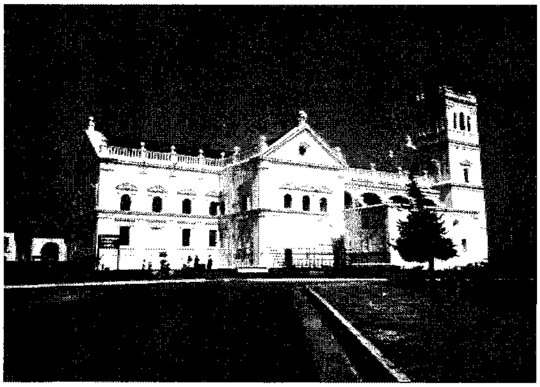

Figure 6.19 Sé Cathedral in Old Goa
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

During this period, many Christian churches and other European-style buildings were constructed in various coastal towns. Typical examples are found in Goa Velha (Old Goa) including the Sé Cathedral built in the fine Renaissance style of the seventeenth century (see Figure 6.19) and the Bom Jesus Basilica, a combination of Renaissance and Baroque styles that houses the remains of St Francis Xavier. The St Francis Church at Fort Mattancherry in Cochin is one of the oldest European churches in India. It is a plain and massive structure built by Portuguese Franciscan friars in 1546. The Mattancherry palace itself was built by the Portuguese in 1557 and rebuilt by the Dutch in 1663. There is also a synagogue of the White Jews, built in 1568 and rebuilt in 1662.

6.6 THE *NĀYAKA* STATES AND THE EMERGENCE OF NEW ETHOS

NOBORU KARASHIMA

The rule of the powerful *nāyakas* in Madurai, Thanjavur, and Senji in the Tamil country (see Figures 6.20 and 6.21) and in Ikkeri in the Kannada country (see Figure 6.22) in the seventeenth century will form the focus of this section. General histories of India in the past rarely mentioned the *nāyakas*, treating the period from 1565 (the Battle of Rakshasi-Tangadi) to 1761 (the rise of Hyder Ali) as something akin to a black hole in south Indian history (Rao et al. 1992: x), though there have been pioneering works on each of these *nāyaka* lineages.[33] Recently, however, two publications recognizing the importance of the *nāyakas* have discussed the ethos of their rule and the period: *Tidings of the King: A Translation and Ethnohistorical Analysis of the Rāyavācakamu*, by Phillip B. Wagoner (1993), and *Symbols of Substance: Court and State in Nayaka Period Tamilnadu*, by V. Narayana Rao, David Shulman, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (1992). It may be noted here that Richard Eaton had also discussed a similar issue (Eaton 2005). *Rāyavācakamu* (Tidings of the King), a Telugu work of historical prose fiction composed at the court of the Madurai Nayaka around the turn of the seventeenth century, narrates the political affairs of Vijayanagar state through the character of the agent of a Madurai Nayaka who claims to have stayed at the court of Krishnadevaraya and even purports to quote his 'utterances'. This work had long been considered a genuine record of earlier events and had even been used as such by historians. Wagoner, however, insists that the real purpose of this composition was to seek legitimacy for the Madurai Nayaka, in whose court it is supposed to have been written, by connecting the *nāyaka* to a past Vijayanagar

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[33] They are: Aiyar 1924 on the Madurai Nayakas, Vriddhagirisan 1942 on the Tanjore Nayakas, Srinivasachari 1943 on the Gingee Nayakas, and Swaminathan 1967 on the Ikkeri Nayakas.

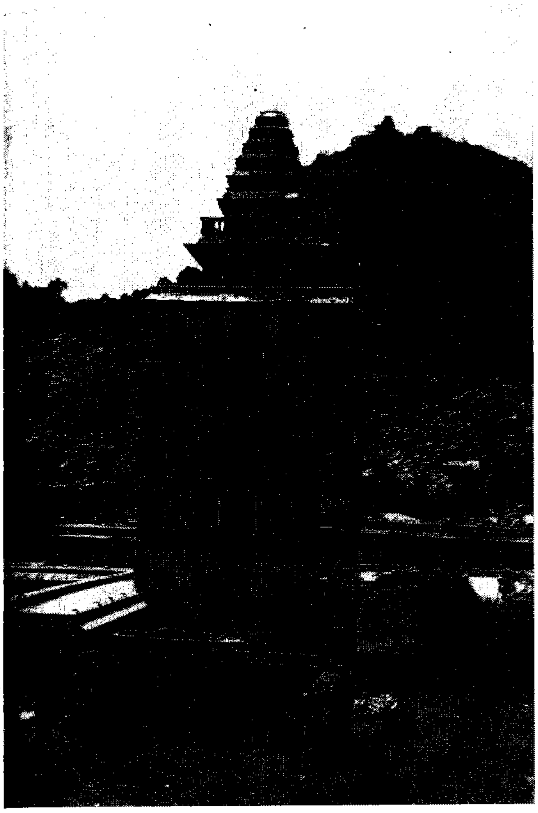

Figure 6.20 A Tower in Senji Fort
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

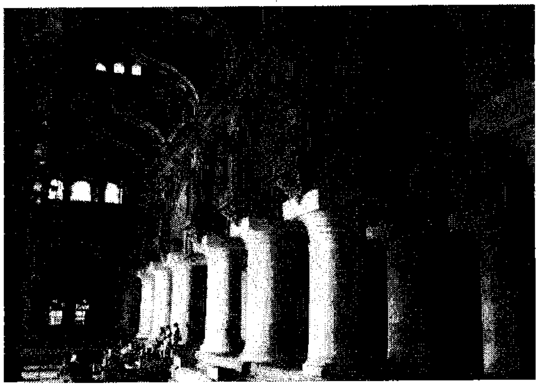

Figure 6.21 Tirumalai Nayaka Palace at Madurai
Source: Courtesy of Takako Karashima.

king, Krishnadevaraya. According to Wagoner, although the legitimacy of the rule was acknowledged (at the time *Rāyavācakamu* was composed) as being conferred by a higher authority, the Aravidu dynasty of Vijayanagar had already lost its prestige owing to the loss of its sacred city, Vijayanagar, in 1565. Therefore, the Madurai Nayakas, to render Madurai a truly credible successor state, had to relate their rule to Krishnadeva who was remembered as the greatest king of Vijayanagar.

The most important point here is the way a dynasty sought to obtain legitimacy for its rule. As we have already seen, the states before the Pallavas took recourse to Brahmanas for legitimacy through Vedic rituals, and though this Vedic way continued even later with some modifications, divine lineage and *dāna* (gifts) assumed greater importance during the Pallava period and after, as seen in section 3.2. During the *nāyaka* period, in contrast, it was the authority of a great political power that gave legitimacy to lesser political powers, according to Wagoner. Vijayanagar itself seems to have sought legitimacy for its rule from a Delhi Sultan by connecting Harihara and Bukka with the Sultan who sent them back to rule Karnataka. The three authors of *Symbols of Substance*, agree with Wagoner on this point and discuss the 'ethos' revealed in the rule of the three *nāyaka* powers in the Tamil country. Before introducing their discussion, however, we shall briefly examine the political history of the three powers and that of the Ikkeri Nayakas.

The death of Venkata II, the Aravidu king of Vijayanagar, without an heir in 1614 caused a bitter succession dispute that developed into a prolonged civil war. As Venkata had nominated Sriranga, his nephew, as his successor before he died, Velugoti Yachama, an influential vassal holding his estate (*amaram*) in the Chengalpat area,[34] supported him, though the people did not regard Sriranga as worthy of the throne. Gobburi

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[34] For the Velugoti lineage, see Rao et al. 1992: 242–64.

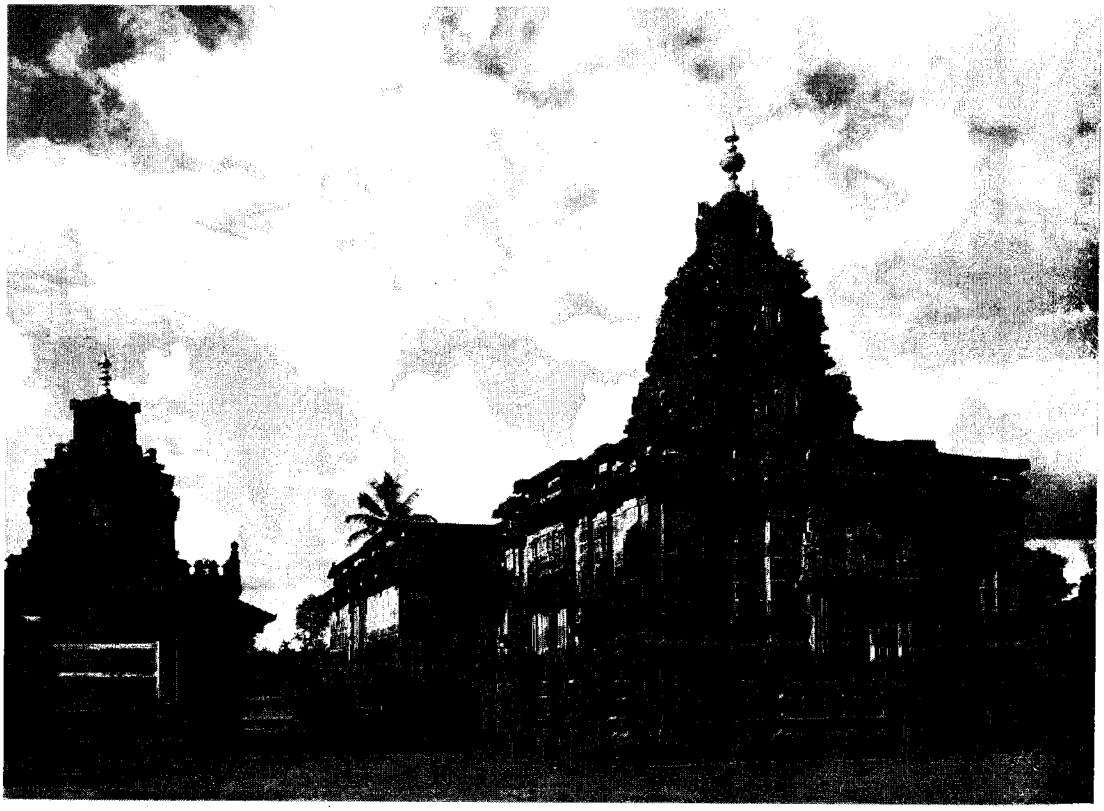

Figure 6.22 Aghoresvara Temple at Ikkeri
Source: Courtesy of Takeo Kamiya.

Jagga Raya, another influential vassal holding an estate in the southwest of Nellore district, who was a brother of Venkata's favourite queen, advanced the claims of a child whom the queen said was Venkata's son. Sriranga and his family were all imprisoned and killed by Jagga, except one son (Rama) who escaped from prison. After this episode, many vassals who were at odds with Jagga took Yachama's side and supported Rama, the survivor of the massacre. Inevitably, war broke out between Jagga and Yachama and all the three big *nāyakas* in the south were involved. Muttu Virappa Nayaka of Madurai and Muttu Krishnappa Nayaka of Senji supported Jagga, and Raghunatha Nayaka of Thanjavur backed Yachama.

A decisive battle took place towards the end of 1616 at Toppur, a village on the southern bank of the Kaveri near the Grand Anicut. Jagga and his allies were defeated, and the putative son of Venkata captured. Muttu Krishnappa Nayaka lost all his forts except Senji, his headquarters. Though Jagga's younger brother, Etiraja, continued the war against Rama and Yachama, a strange reconciliation had taken place between Rama and Etiraja by 1620.[35] After this, by

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[35] Etiraja even married his daughter to the new king Ramadeva. The authors of *Symbols of Substance* take this strange reconciliation as reflection of the new ethos different from that of the Vijayanagar period by stating, 'This reversal is typical of the shifting alliances of this period' (Rao et al: 1992: 255–6).

1630, the Vijayanagar king's authority was re-established to certain extent, but not before the threat from Golkonda and Bijapur in the north had increased owing to this civil war.

There are a variety of sources for the history of this period.[36] From the literary works produced in the courts of the *nāyakas*, we may get the impression that the *nāyakas* in the south, at least the three Nayaka families of Madurai, Thanjavur, and Senji, were quite independent of the authority of the Vijayanagar kings, each forming a kingdom from the latter half of the sixteenth century. However, Portuguese and Dutch sources reveal that even these big *nāyakas* paid tributes to the Vijayanagar court at the beginning of the seventeenth century. According to a Jesuit report written in 1608 during the reign of Venkata II, the Thanjavur and Madurai Nayakas paid their tributes in his court, but the Senji Nayaka did not. Consequently, Venkata II dispatched an armed contingent out to Senji to secure the payment and the Senji Nayaka also fell in line. Even after the civil war, the *nāyakas* seem to have paid tributes, amounting to a fourth of their revenues in some cases, but a Jesuit report also refers to arrears after the war (Rao et al. 1992: 105–7).

Inscriptions and literary sources from the period provide us with genealogies of the three *nāyaka* families in the Tamil country and also of the Ikkeri Nayaka family in Karnataka.[37] The Madurai Nayakas start their genealogy from Nagama, the Thanjavur Nayakas from Chevvappa, the Senji Nayakas from Vaiyappa, and the Ikkeri Nayakas from Chaudappa. These four founding-members of the respective dynasties belonged to the early half of the sixteenth century and were appointed to their posts of *nāyaka* by Krishnadevaraya or Achutadevaraya. Though *nāyakas* were often transferred from one place to another during the reigns of these two powerful kings, as already seen in a previous section, the *nāyakas* of these four families succeeded in holding on to their respective territories without being transferred. They strengthened their position in the latter half of the sixteenth century, especially after the battle of 1565, but they seem to have remained loyal until the time of the civil war to the king as *nāyakas* responsible for the administration of their respective territories. In 1584, a Srimushnam inscription (*SII*, xvi, 294: SA) specified Bhuvanagiri-sirmai as the *nāyakattanam* of Senji Kondama Nayaka (son of Krishnappa).

However, Sriranga III, who ascended the Vijayanagar throne in 1642, having been abandoned by the rebel *nāyakas* of Madurai and Senji, stayed at Thanjavur for some time. After Thanjavur fell in 1649 to Bijapur, he sought asylum in Mysore (under the rule of the Wodeyars). A few years later, however, he returned to the Carnatic (Coromandel) and regained Chandragiri for some time owing to the conflict which happened between Golkonda and Bijapur and the Mughal attacks on these sultanates. Having spent some years in the Carnatic, however, he was again betrayed by his vassals (Nayakas of Senji, Thanjavur, and Madurai) and sought refuge in Karnataka. This time he became a protégé of Sivappa Nayaka of Ikkeri, who treated Sriranga as his overlord, though nominally (Swaminathan 1967: 89–92). He was the last king of Vijayanagar,[38] though as a de facto polity it had ceased to be by the middle of the seventeenth century. Golkonda and Bijapur virtually terminated *nāyaka* rule in Senji but Thanjavur, Madurai, Mysore, and Ikkeri retained their independence for some time. The invasion by Bijapur under the command of the Maratha general Venkoji (Ekoji) finally brought Maratha rule to Thanjavur in 1676.[39] During the rule of Tirumalai Nayaka (c. 1623–59), the Madurai Nayaka polity attained its most illustrious phase; its end came as a result of an attack by the Nawab of Arcot in 1732. The Ikkeri polity was absorbed into Mysore by Hyder Ali in 1763.

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[36] Sources of Nayaka period history are (*a*) inscriptions of the period, (*b*) Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Sanskrit literary works written (mostly in the courts) during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, (*c*) contemporary reports of Portuguese missionaries and of the Dutch East India Company, and (*d*) accounts of European travellers.

[37] The succession was often directly from father to son.

During the seventeenth century *nāyakas* and other political powers in the Deccan and Tamil Nadu employed small chieftains for local administration and for guarding the forest area or highways. The chieftains were called *pāḷaiyakāran* in Tamil (*pāḷegāra* in Kannada, *pāḷegāḍu* in Telugu, and *poligar* in English) and some of them were successful in making their territory called *pāḷayam* (*pollam* in English) powerful on account of the disturbed political situation of the time. For example, the Sethupathis, who were Marava chieftains, established a powerful *pāḷayam* in Ramanathapuram[40] serving the Madurai Nayaka (see Figure 6.23). Poligars in Tamil Nadu were mostly loyal to their overlord, one of the three Nayakas, fighting together against the invaders from the north.

In the eighteenth century the Mughal rule extended to the south through the hands of Nizam of Hyderabad and Nawab of Arcot. Though *nāyakas* in Tamil Nadu whom poligars had served almost disappeared, they being defeated and replaced by the Nawab, Marathas, and Mysore, the poligars themselves got involved subsequently in the Carnatic and Mysore Wars as almost independent local powers. Some of them became hostile to the English who demanded a part of their revenue and fought against them (Rajayyan 1974).[41]

According to the three authors of *Symbols of Substance*, a new ethos was developing in the society of this period, particularly in the court of the *nāyakas*, an ethos defined by 'money', a liquid form of property apart from 'land'. The *nāyakas* as well as their subjects were all deeply obsessed with money, and this obsession may be one of the reasons for the rebellion of Nagama Nayaka of Madurai against Krishnadevaraya, leading to a crisis in the very initial stage of the establishment of the Madurai Nayaka polity. The three authors cite various narratives underlining the importance of money in the seventeenth century. The

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[38] Inscriptions provide conflicting evidences regarding the regnal dates of Srirangaraya III, taking his rule up to the early part of the eighteenth century. Tentatively, the year 1682 is generally taken as the closing year on the basis of Kannada inscriptions (Ritti and Gopal 2009: xxviii).

[39] Venkoji, half-brother of Sivaji, invaded Thanjavur in 1675 and seems to have carried out the order of his master, the sultan of Bijapur, to enthrone a child prince said to be the son or grandson of Vijayaraghava, who died fighting in vain against the Madurai sultan's army in 1673. Shortly after, in 1676, however, Venkoji usurped the Thanjavur throne and started his own Maratha rule (Sathianathaier 1956: 92–7).

[40] In this area two more powerful *pāḷayams*, Pudukkottai of Tondaimans and Sivaganga of Tevar, were created in the eighteenth century. Pudukkottai Palayam was defined as 'little kingdom' by Nicholas Dirks (Dirks 1987) and this definition has raised a brisk discussion, for which see Berkemer and Frenz 2003.

[41] Vira Pandya Kattabomman of Panjalamkurichi, one of the last poligars who fought against the English, was caught and executed in 1799, to be remembered hence as a patriot.

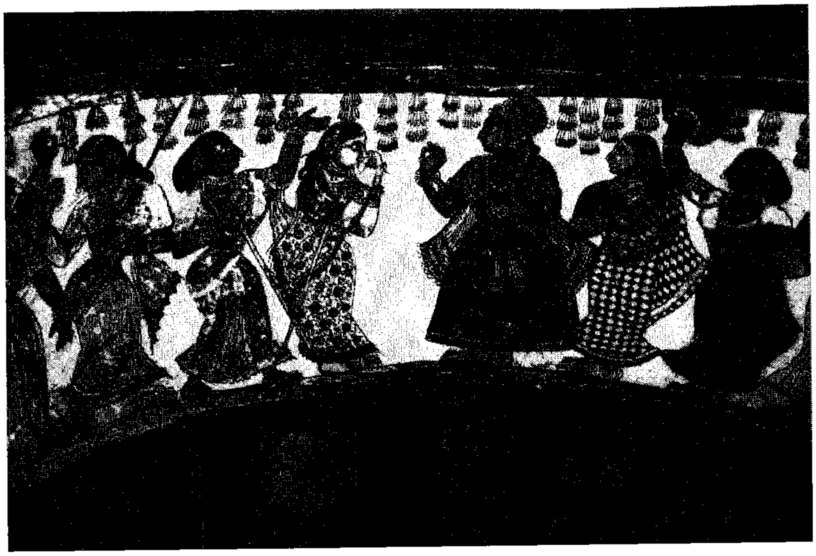

Figure 6.23 Mural (Eighteenth Century) of the Sethupathis' Palace in Ramanathapuram
Source: Courtesy of Takako Karashima.

personal qualities of individuals, apart from their ascriptive values such as caste, lineage, and position, were also highly valued in this period. This is well represented by Vishvanatha Nayaka's intelligence, determination, and bravery, which saved his father, Nagama Nayaka, from the crisis and enabled him to establish power in Madurai. This point relates to the inversion of the caste hierarchy by praising the Sudra origins of the *nāyakas*. Physical enjoyment of life such as sex and food were other newly valourized traits and the three authors substantiate this with many citations from literature as well.

Although there is a possibility that this new ethos derived from the original culture of the *nāyaka* immigrants and developed further due to its interaction with the Tamil milieu, it is more likely that it grew spontaneously all over south India[42] because of its involvement with the world economy and the cultural influences that came in its wake. In the seventeenth century, following the Portuguese who made their commercial foray into India earlier, other European powers also established strongholds on the south Indian coast and became involved in local politics. In any case, the fact that drastic changes occurred in south Indian culture during the *nāyaka* period invites further studies.

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[42] In the foundation myth of the Ikkeri Nayakas in Karnataka also, buried treasure (money) and the personal qualities of Chaudappa, the founder, played a crucial role. See Swaminathan 1967, pp. 12–19.

6.7 THE COMING OF THE EUROPEANS

NOBUHIRO OTA

6.7.1 The Advent of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean

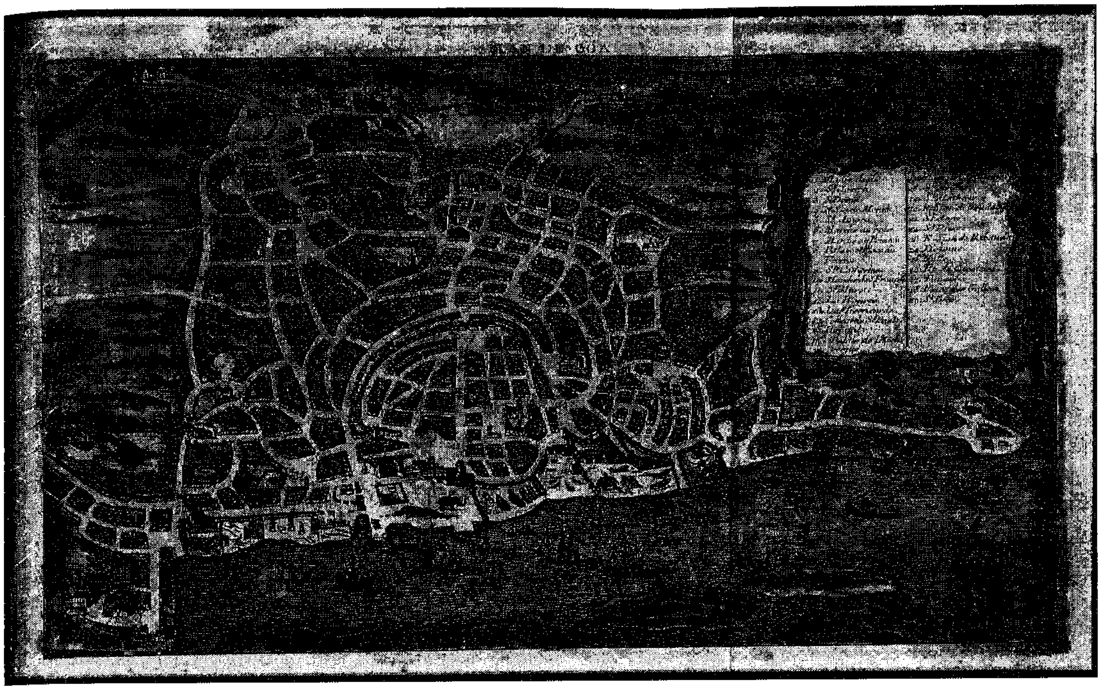
In 1498, Vasco da Gama, commanding a Portuguese fleet, arrived at Kozhikode (Calicut) via the Cape of Good Hope, thus becoming the first explorer to sail directly from Europe to India after decades of maritime expeditions financed by the Portuguese royal household

Figure 6.24 Vasco da Gama on Viceroy's Gate at Goa
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

(see Figure 6.24). Taking this newly opened sea lane, the Portuguese made inroads into the Indian Ocean. Their primary destination was the Malabar Coast, which had the pepper producing area as its hinterland. Kochi, where the Portuguese government of India was first located, became a major entrepôt exporting Indian pepper to Lisbon, the main task of the *Estado da India*. In order to monopolize the supply of pepper to European markets, the Portuguese used brute force to try and block existing pepper trade routes used by Muslim merchants, capturing their ships on the Arabian Sea. To drive home their naval hegemony, they defeated off Diu in 1509 a Mamluk squadron that was supported by various Muslim powers in the Indian Ocean and by Venice.

Behind the Portuguese hostility against Muslim merchants, there might have been the frenzy of the Christian faith that filled the Iberian Peninsula in the aftermath of the *Reconquista*. In the 1540s, when the Jesuits arrived in India and the Council of Trent initiated the Counter-Reformation, they formulated policies inimical to gentile residents in their territories such as Goa (see Map 6.8). The authorities, however, did not strictly implement these policies, and the gentile faith and practice were tolerated especially because native, non-Christian merchants were indispensable as trade partners or as collaborators. The Portuguese did not directly purchase pepper from producers but through intermediaries, most of whom were local Syrian Christians or Muslims, especially those who had deep roots in southern India.

Initially, the Portuguese tried to control the Indian Ocean trade with their supreme naval power. But the blockade strategy of eliminating trade competitors by brute force was abandoned shortly and the system of trade licence (*cartaz*) introduced instead. The licence system, however, was so porous that the trading activities of native merchants were not particularly disrupted. Though the pepper trade was declared a monopoly of the *Estado da India*, pepper was brought to different parts of India and Asia not only by local merchants but also by Portuguese private traders. Although the Portuguese could not manage things as they wished, this did not mean that the maritime trade in and around southern India did not change with the opening of the direct sea lane between India and Europe at the end of the fifteenth century. The sixteenth century witnessed alterations of trade routes and some port cities and mercantile groups suffered



Map 6.8 Map of Goa in the Sixteenth Century
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima, who owns the map.

resultant vicissitudes of fortune. Among these changes, the decline of Kozhikode and the rise of Kochi were the direct results of the Portuguese policy of dominating the maritime trade by force. But the rapid decline of Pulicat and Bhatkal in the 1570s, despite Portuguese influence, was more directly linked to the destruction of the royal capital of Vijayanagara, the then biggest consumer city in southern India, which had been connected by inland trade routes to these two port cities (Subrahmanyam 1990: 113, 121–34). In short, although Portuguese activity brought about changes in the maritime trade of sixteenth-century southern India, it was not the only factor to do so.

6.7.2 Trade Competition between the Dutch and the English in the Seventeenth Century

The maritime trade of India in the seventeenth century is marked by the full-fledged entries of the British and the Dutch. The latter, seeking cotton textiles to offer in exchange for the spices they procured in Southeast Asia, where too they found the Portuguese already entrenched, arrived on the Coromandel Coast, first gaining ascendancy by the end of the 1630s and, after the occupation in 1658 of Nagapattinam, triggering the rapid ebbing of Portuguese power in the Coromandel, as also in Southeast Asia (see Figure 6.25).

At the beginning, both the English and the Dutch East India companies purchased cotton textiles on the Coromandel Coast mainly to export to Southeast Asia, but after the 1640s export of cotton textiles to Europe was on the rise. As the popularity of cotton goods soared among European consumers during the second half of the seventeenth century, both companies began to export more cotton textiles to Europe than to Asia, recording a marked increase in the

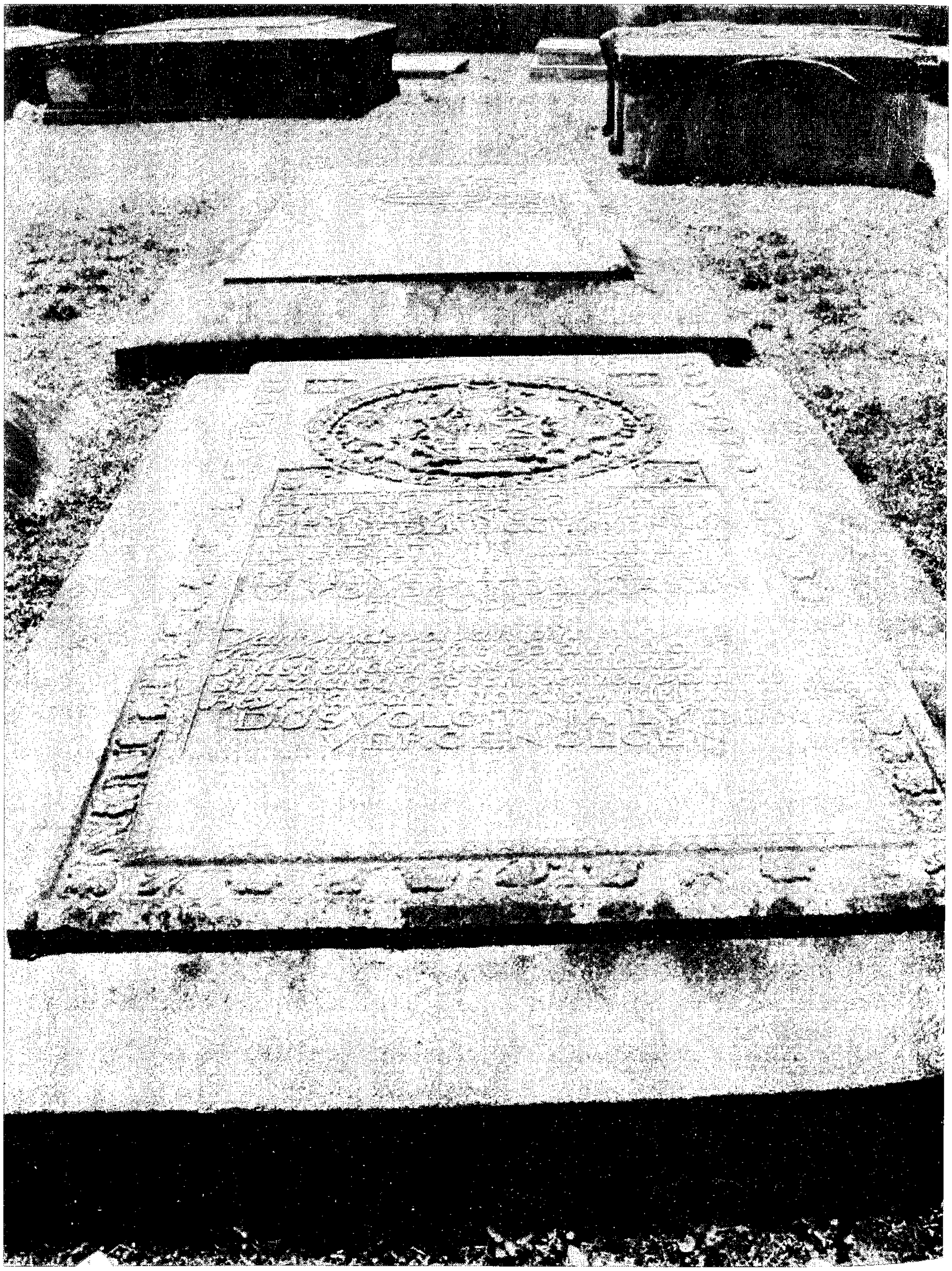


Figure 6.25 Dutch Cemetery by the Side of the Ruined Dutch Fort in Pulicut
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

amount of textiles exported. The Dutch ventured further down into the southern part of the Coromandel Coast in search of new suppliers of cotton textiles and the British were not far behind (Arasaratnam 1996: 10). The trade of the English East India Company on this coast expanded with its stronghold, Madras, growing into a big city absorbing from its neighbouring regions a lot of immigrants seeking to escape from socio-political instability before and after the conquest of southern India by the Mughals. Not only craftsmen, particularly weavers, but also merchants and bankers, including the Portuguese of Mylapore, thronged Madras with its protection by Fort St George. As a result, the population of the city exceeded 100,000 by around 1700.

On the Malabar Coast too, Portuguese power was practically wiped out by the late seventeenth century. Both the Dutch and the British concluded treaties with native lords there on unequal terms and acquired monopolies over the purchase of pepper produced in their territories though the scale and detail of monopoly was different among them. Thus, on the Malabar Coast, both countries could procure their main trade item, pepper, at a price lower than the 'market value'. On the other hand, on the Coromandel Coast, which was much more important for their business, they could not help but act within the framework of the existing political order, although conflicts involving trade interests sometimes developed into military conflicts between them and the native powers. Sometimes they found themselves at the mercy of exploiting local officials or tossed back and forth in the vortex of war among native powers. When purchasing cotton textiles from their producers, they needed to pay a decent price in a sort of free market where competing buyers, native or European, always existed. At least until the colonial state established tight control over their activities in the late eighteenth century, weavers and other artisans in southern India continued to enjoy bargaining power as their products were highly sought after by merchants (Brennig 1986: 352; Parthasarathi 2001: 148).

What impact did the rapidly expanding trade of the Dutch and the English East India companies have on native merchants? The latter with their own capital, knowledge, and networks were indispensable partners of the former, as they had been of the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. The companies tried controlling, or utilizing more effectively, native merchants who purchased local products for them by organizing them into 'joint stock companies'. Though this ploy succeeded to an extent, some native merchants retained enough independence to continue or cease dealings with companies in accordance with their own wishes and interests (Brennig 1979; Arasaratnam 1986: 213–73).

It has been pointed out that after the second half of the seventeenth century when British traders entered the intra-Asian trade on a large scale, on some important trade routes vessels owned by Englishmen replaced those of native merchants. However, since the decline of the latter did not happen simultaneously all over the entire intra-Asian sector, it is difficult to estimate how far the setback to native merchant activity on certain routes could be attributed to the intrusion of European traders and vessels. Some scholars, emphasizing the flexibility of native merchants, opine that though exposed to economic (and occasionally military) pressure from the Dutch and the British, they managed to continue independent maritime trade by exploring new routes and ports (Prakash 1998: 236–7; Arasaratnam 1986: 220). It is also important to note that European vessels engaging in intra-Asian trade usually carried cargo belonging to native merchants who sometimes jointly arranged with their European counterparts some voyages between Asian ports. Intra-Asian trade, therefore, not only witnessed competition but also collaboration between the European and native merchants.

6.7.3 The Decline of the Dutch and the Advent of the French in the Eighteenth Century

From the end of the seventeenth century, the competitiveness of the Dutch East India Company against its English counterpart declined and the latter's dominant position became apparent. This was mainly because the English were able to steadily expand trade with ample funds. Dutch trade, however, did not, in absolute terms, show signs of decay. Although the amount of cotton textiles exported by the Dutch from the Coromandel Coast fluctuated substantially from year to year from the end of the seventeenth century, it did not really decline (Prakash 1998: 222–3). On the Malabar Coast, however, the Dutch received serious setbacks when local lords, from whom the Dutch had obtained pepper procurement monopolies, were defeated and their territories annexed to the Travancore kingdom, which emerged as a regional power under the enlightened leadership of Marthanda Varman. The Dutch finally lost dominance on the Malabar Coast altogether when the Travancore kingdom defeated them at the Battle of Colachel in 1741.

In eighteenth-century southern India, the French replaced the Dutch as prime competitor of the English. Pondicherry, founded by the French, grew rapidly into a major centre of commerce and industry, drawing merchants and artisans from surrounding regions. Attempting to enhance French dominance in southern India, Duplex provoked a confrontation with the English after arriving in Pondicherry as the Governor in 1742. Thus the war between the British and French, which was being fought all over the world over colonies, came to southern India.

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CHAPTER 7

Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

British Rule and Indian Society

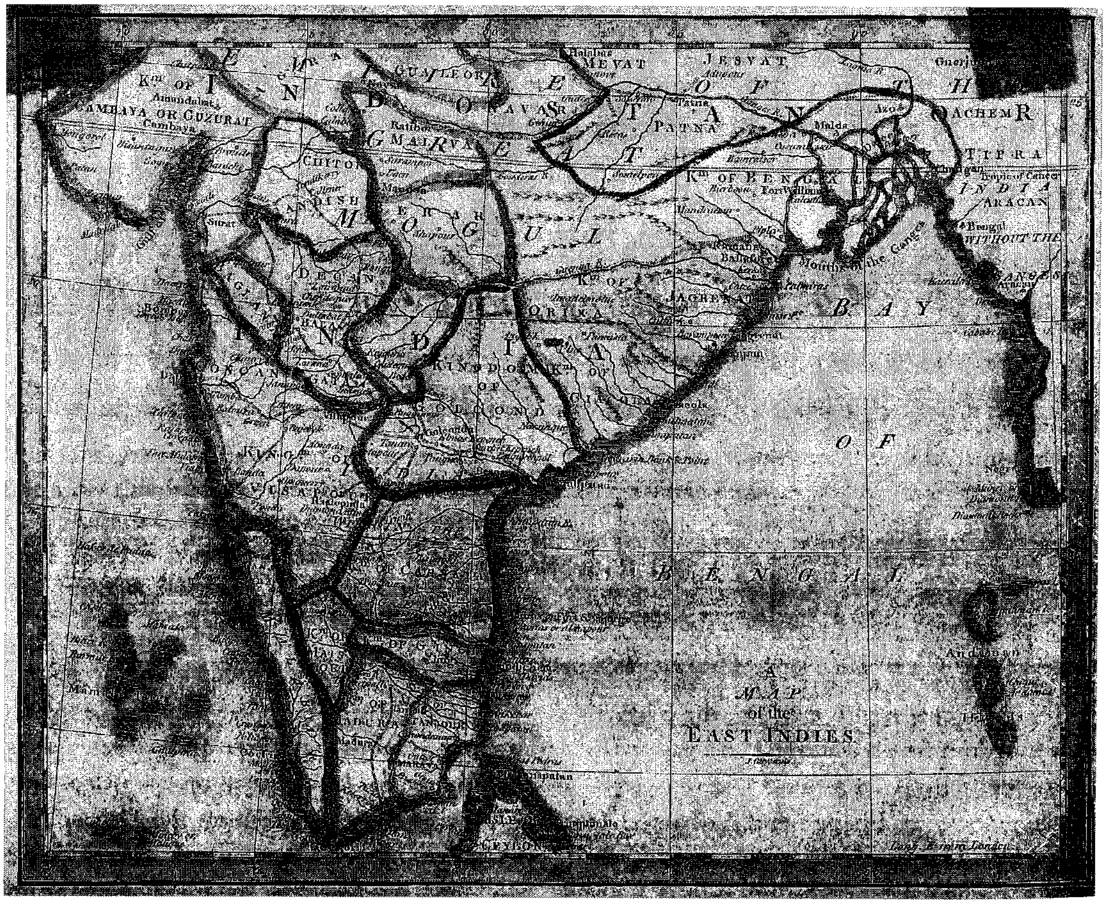
7.1 REGIONAL STATES

7.1.1 The Deccan Sultanates and the Hegemony of the Mughals

NOBUHIRO OTA

In the mid-seventeenth century, the Vijayanagara kingdom finally vanished and major parts of southern India came under the control of the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda (see Map 7.1). The two Sultanates extended their sway by militarily overwhelming local powers such as the Nayakas who till then had been subjects of the Vijayanagara kings. The Nayakas now began to pay obeisance and tribute to the Sultanates. The area under the Sultanates' direct rule was very limited and they removed existing local rulers only in the regions directly surrounding their newly founded politico-military centres. To these centres, scattered over various parts, the Sultans dispatched senior officials to look after local administration and collect tribute from subordinate, local rulers. Shahaji, the father of the first Maratha king, Shivaji, was one such official assigned to take charge of Bangalore and its surrounding areas after being actively involved in the campaign by the Bijapur kingdom.

In the late 1680s, the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb sent to southern India a huge army that fought the Marathas at several places both before and after vanquishing the Deccan Sultanates. During these recurrent wars with the Marathas, the Mughals set about reorganizing provincial administration in southern India. New administrative units were introduced and organized—with the largest being the *suba*s (provinces), of which there were six, comprising the smaller *sarkar*s (districts) and *pargana*s (counties). Revenue generals (*diwan*s) and military commanders (*faujdar*s), besides provincial governors (*subadar*s), were posted in regional headquarters to look after local administration and maintain public order. The details of the rule over southern India by the Deccan Sultanates and the Mughals remain to be investigated. Though it is known that local officials such as *desai*s and *deshpande*s (generically called *zamindar*s in vernacular records) were appointed at administrative units above



Map 7.1 Map of the East Indies Published in London in 1781
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima, who owns the map.

village level in the area under their direct rule, it is difficult to say to what extent centralized revenue administration was introduced by the Mughals in southern India (Nayeem 1985). Documents that have remained unexplored till now may shed light on how those Muslims states actually functioned in the local societies of southern India.

With the demise of Aurangzeb, the Mughals declined rapidly and many senior officials tried to become independent of the Mughal central government in various parts of India. Among the 'successor states' set up by such senior officials in southern India, the Nizams (their capital first was at Aurangabad and was later shifted to Hyderabad) and the Nawabs of Arcot were especially important. Besides these successor states, some local powers came to occupy influential positions in south Indian politics, utilizing for their own ends alliances and collaboration with the (successor states of the) Mughals or/and the Marathas who were fighting each other and were eager to enlist the military help proffered by these local powers.

7.1.2 Successor State: Hyderabad

KEIKO YAMADA

After Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb's conquest, the Deccan suffered a series of wars between the local rulers on one side and raids and plunder by the Marathas on the other. In addition, banditry and famine worsened the political disorder and devastated the local economy. Since it was situated on the frontier of the Empire, Mughal administration was impaired and the government's mismanagement gradually weakened the region's economy. Eventually, the decline of the Empire encouraged some ambitious soldiers in the army to fight for sovereignty over the Deccan, and finally Mubazir Khan, the Subedar of the Deccan, emerged powerful and restored the political and economic order besides formalizing the administrative and financial structures in the region. When he was killed and replaced by Nizam-ul-Mulk in 1724, who was granted the title *Asaf Jah*, the foundation of a new dynasty had already been laid (Richards 1975) (see Figure 7.1).

The first Nizam brought thousands of Muslims from the north, including military personnel, scholars, and noblemen. The monetary system was also taken from the Mughal administration and coins were issued in the name of the Mughal Emperor. Even the *khutba* was read. In his own seal, the Nizam called himself 'the servant of the Emperor' and never declared independence. Since the new Muslim ruling elites had come from a land that was far away, there was a wide cultural gap between them and the locals. Several traditions reflecting the Mughal culture came to play a practical role in the Deccan region. They were not mere formalities to show legitimacy or signs of nostalgia, but tools to strengthen their solidarity with and loyalty to the Nizam, that would ultimately guarantee the stability of the dynasty. From this viewpoint, it is not wrong to call it a 'successor state', as many scholars often do. However, this is true only of the Muslim elites, who were a minority.

Some fundamental features of the Asaf Jahi dynasty came from its regional specificity and were in no way inherited from the Empire. A good example is the tradition of Deccani Islam, particularly Shia, which goes back to

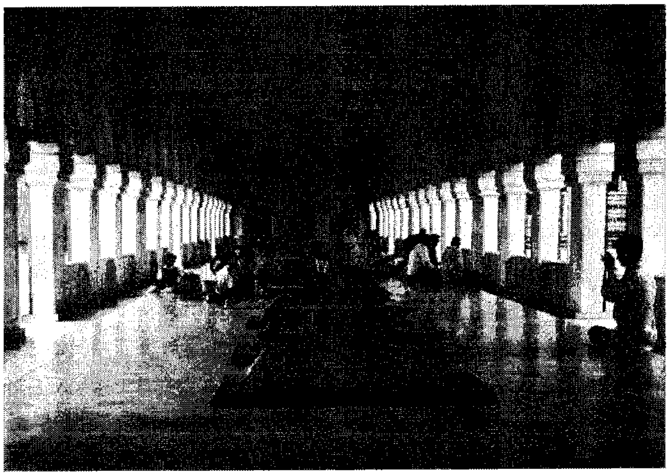


Figure 7.1 Tombs of the Nizams and Their Family in Mecca Masjid in Hyderabad
Source: Courtesy of Keiko Yamada.

the days of the Qutub Shahi and the Bijapur rulers. The Nizam's family was Sunni, but the number of Shia nobles, once associated with previous sultanates, slowly increased in the court (Leonard 1971:581). At the same time, many who saw the Deccan as a citadel of Islamic culture migrated from war-torn places such as Mysore and succeeded in establishing a unique, urban Muslim elite culture in the Deccan. Their language, Dakhni, which started as a Sufi language in the fourteenth century, survived among urban Muslims behind Persian and the vernaculars, and was finally upgraded to an official language in the nineteenth century. Other examples such as the Deccan paintings originating from the Golconda school of the Qutub Shahi period also provided evidence that even in the elite domain, continuity rather than discontinuity with the regional past was prominent.

The Nizam's policy towards locals, who were mostly Hindu, also prevented drastic changes in the existing social and power dispensation. *Jizya* was not levied on non-Muslims, and *panchayats* accepted arbitrations that were not based on the *Sharia* (Faruqui 2009: 41). With the gradual restoration of peace, the importance of military affairs declined and that of civil administration increased. In civil administration, Hindus, who had initially lost influence in the Asaf Jahi government, slowly regained power. Consequently, by the end of the eighteenth century, the systems, although bearing the same names as those used by Mughals, were indigenized and started operating very differently (Leonard 1971; Ramusack 2004: 26). First, *jagirs* that were supposed to be transferred changed into inheritable property, indicating the status of their possessors. Thus, the *mansabdari* system turned into a mere shell. Second, various ranks of intermediaries emerged with a key role in administration. For instance, *vakils*, who worked between the Nizam and the nobles, influenced politics. The *daftardars* (record-keepers appointed by the *diwan*) controlled revenue and finance. Brahmins, *zamindars*, and warriors dominated local posts like *taluqdar* (tax collection agent), *deshmukh* (village official), accountant, and other lower-level revenue functions, and they created a complex patron–client nexus.

The strong dependence on these intermediaries had, in fact, been the case even prior to the founding of the Asaf Jahi dynasty. When Aurangzeb conquered the Deccan, instead of imposing the Mughal revenue system that of the Qutub Shahis was adopted intact. Local Telugu warrior chiefs, who had earlier been village headmen, and their Brahmin assistants slipped into a new role as tax collection agents (Richards 1993: 228). So, initially, a policy of non-intervention as far as the local administration was concerned ensured that it remained mostly unchanged under the Asaf Jahis. Thus, the local public order and its framework were not very different from an already familiar system. The control by the government did not reach the masses, and they still regarded their traditional landlords, who were called *jagirdars*, *deshmukhs*, and so on, as their direct rulers. Most *jagirdars* were local chiefs or *rajas* whose *Sanads* given by the Qutub Shahi kings were reconfirmed by the Nizam's government. Some *jagirdars* were also migrants from the north who were assigned military responsibilities. However, many like the major Telugu independent local rulers of the Samsthans in Telangana only paid an annual tribute without owing any other duties. They maintained their own courts, sometimes issued coins, and were not integrated into the Nizam's political and cultural realm. In non-*jagir* lands as well, *deshmukhs* controlled the revenue directly and acted as virtual landlords. It was these regimes that were criticized in the twentieth century as leftovers of feudalism and abolished to end the rule of the dynasty.

While the Nizam's rule was successful in the Telangana region, he failed to win over the loyalty of the defiant local *rajas* in coastal Andhra. It is not clear how important the Asaf Jahis considered control of the coastline to be. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, mainly due to prolonged warfare, overseas trade in Masulipatnam, the best strategic point, had already seriously declined (Arasaratnam and Ray 1994). After the first Nizam died, the coastal regions began to be ceded to the French in exchange for military cooperation in a series of succession wars. Maverick *rajas* of the ceded districts intensified the anti-French war. The Vizianagaram *raja* gave ports and towns to his ally, the English East India Company, in 1758, and this was the first step towards British rule. By the mid-eighteenth century the English had a clear advantage over the French. Nizam Ali Khan, the fourth and youngest son of the first Nizam and himself Asaf Jah II, entered into six treaties with the English by 1800. By the time the last treaty of 1800, known as the Treaty of Subsidiary Alliance, was concluded, British battalions were stationed at the capital, Hyderabad. The cost was not only paid from the Nizam's treasury, but also the southern part of his territory (Rayalaseema, also called as the Ceded Districts) was given to the British. And, thus, the age of the British rule, the direct one in Andhra and Rayalaseema (jointly forming the northern part of the Madras Presidency) and the indirect one in Asaf Jahi territory (the Hyderabad Princely State) began.

On the whole, the eighteenth-century Asaf Jahi era could be seen as the age of regeneration of regionally oriented social orders that facilitated the transfer of the region to the English. However, it seems to be incompatible with the three points of discussion familiar to other regions in the same period. The first point is 'military fiscalism'. Though all five rulers of the dynasty in the eighteenth century were involved in wars with neighbouring kingdoms and foreign powers, peace eventually returned to the region and towards the end of the century the military lost its initial power. The second point is overseas trade. There was no active spice trade during the period, especially in the northern Coromandel region. Overseas trade did not occupy an important position in the state finances as the erstwhile robust diamond trade industry had already declined. Even textiles, in great demand abroad, were mostly produced in the *zamindari* areas of coastal regions where the Nizams' rule was only nominal and that too for a short period. The third and the final point is whether the eighteenth century was an age of economic development. In fact, the century witnessed uneven economic development in the region. For example, in Hyderabad city, the capital since the mid-eighteenth century, substantial commercial activity was generated. Bankers such as Marwaris, Agarwals, and Jains, who migrated from western India, were given protection. Sikhs, Marathas, and Europeans were employed in military service and settled down in the city. The massive influx from other parts of India for various activities signifies the development of the capital as an affluent cosmopolitan city. Nevertheless, there is not enough evidence in other regions to prove that such development was an overall phenomenon of the eighteenth century Asaf Jahi dispensation. The once-popular view that the regional economy faced 'crisis' with the decline of the Mughal Empire is too simplistic, but so is the reverse view that assumes a general, overall promising development in the Deccan.

7.1.3 Successor State: Mysore

NOBUHIRO OTA

The Mysore kingdom was one of the local powers that succeeded to some extent in setting up a centralized government machinery on the lines of the Mughal administration. Though little is known about the origin of the Mysore royal family, their ancestors were among the local magnates of the so-called viceroys at Srirangapattana who, in turn, were sent by the Vijayanagara kings of the Aravidu dynasty to rule the upper basin of the Kaveri River. The magnates (often referred to as *prabhus*), including the Mysore family, paid tribute and offered military service to the viceroys at Srirangapattana while also semi-independently ruling their own estates. As the years went by, hostilities cropped up between viceroys and some of the *prabhus*. Finally, in 1610, the last viceroy was ousted from Srirangapattana by the combined forces of the local magnates led by the Mysore family's Raja Odeya, who was coronated there.

From the late 1630s,the forces of the Bijapur Sultans invaded the newly formed kingdom several times and besieged Srirangapattana, its capital, more than once, but each time the kingdom got through this difficulty either by paying tributes or by fighting desperately. The territory of the kingdom extended beyond the erstwhile domain of the Vijayanagara viceroys in all directions and during the third quarter of the seventeenth century the kingdom fought several battles with the Nayakas of Madurai over Baramahal. The politico-military regime of the early Mysore kings was rather decentralized, similar to that of the Vijayanagara viceroys, until drastic changes were carried out during the reign of Cikka Deva Raja (1673–1704).

Cikka Deva Raja allied himself with the Mughals against the Marathas and succeeded in obtaining Bangalore and consolidating his rule in the northern and western parts of Baramahal. At the same time, he strived to centralize the state. The *prabhus*, who were matrimonially linked to the royal family and had been militarily helping the early Mysore kings establish their powers, were deprived of their own hereditary estates by the end of the seventeenth century and were assembled to form a caste-like, delocalized group (called *arasu*) with the royal family at its apex. The entire kingdom was divided into the three-tier administrative units of districts (*sthalas*), counties (*hobalis*), and villages, and senior officials (some of whom were *arasus*) were appointed and dispatched by the central government to district headquarters. At the centre, ministries dealing with specialized duties were instituted and scribes (*karaṇikas*) were appointed there to attend to practical business and keep records. A standing army of substantial size was organized and maintained under the direct control of the central government, making possible a long military campaign throughout the year. Though much remains obscure about the composition of the standing army, it seems probable that *arasus* formed its core.

During the first half of the eighteenth century, the Mysore kingdom was repeatedly invaded by the armies of the Peshwas, the Ghorpades (Maratha warlords), and the Nawabs of Arcot, and forced to pay huge amounts of tribute on some occasions. But the kingdom managed to maintain its territorial integrity and played an important role in the war that, ignited by succession disputes over the Nawabship of Arcot and of the Nizamship, involved almost all the regional states of southern India and the two rival European powers—the British and the French—in the 1740s and 1750s. As for the domestic administration, Brahmin officials dealing with practical business increased their political influence, to the chagrin of the *arasus*. The resentment of the *arasus* over the rapid rise of Brahmin officials sometimes resulted in political unrest (Subrahmanyam 1989). This rivalry, which had already come to affect the politics of the kingdom in the eighteenth century, has been cited as a factor behind the big commotion that threatened the survival of the kingdom in the 1830s. In the military, on the other hand, mercenary leaders (generally called *jamadars*) who raised troops on their own gained importance during this period. A nephew of such a mercenary leader was Hyder Ali, who seized power in 1761.

The policies adopted by regional states of the eighteenth century in India to strengthen military forces and expand fiscal resources (especially by centralizing revenue administration) concurrently, have been called 'military fiscalism' and Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan are often cited as typical rulers promoting such policies (Stein 1985). In the historiography of the Mysore kingdom, much attention has been paid to these processes in the days of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, but they should be seen as part of the historical development that the kingdom's government machinery underwent since its foundation. Only then will what father and son achieved become clearer. It is true that Hyder Ali, like other eighteenth-century Indian rulers, strived to organize European-style military forces. But it should be noted that even before Hyder came to power, the Mysore army included Portuguese or Luso-Indian officers and soldiers. Furthermore, Hyder Ali is supposed to have centralized the revenue administration and started collecting taxes directly from peasant cultivators through centrally appointed officials in order to cover mounting military expenditure. But both the standing army financed by the coffers of the state and the centralized revenue administration had already come into existence by the end of the seventeenth century.

The keen interest Hyder and Tipu showed in trade, especially maritime, and their active diplomacy of sending missions to various countries like the Ottoman Empire and France, along with the seemingly unique character of Tipu's personality, have attracted the attention of many scholars (Brittlebank 1997; Habib 1999). However, we may have to reconsider the historical implications of what Hyder and Tipu did in the second half of the eighteenth century by placing and seeing them both in the longer course of Mysore history and in the historical context of the early modern Islamic world where statecraft and commerce were often intertwined.

7.1.4 Successor State: Tanjore

TAKAKO INOUE

Thanjavur, ruled initially by the Nayakas and then by the Marathas, can be regarded as one of the so-called successor states. Though military fiscalism is considered a characteristic of these states, Thanjavur also showed another distinct characteristic, the development of culture, particularly literature and the performing arts, as we shall see in this section.

The dynasty was established by Cevvappa (1532–80), whose wife, Murtimamba, was the sister-in-law of the Vijayanagar king, Achyutadevaraya. During his son Achutappa's reign (1560–1614)[1], the Vijayanagar Empire was defeated at the battle of Rakshasi-Tangadi. Achuthappa continued to be loyal to the empire while the Nayakas of Gingee and Madurai often displayed rebellious attitudes. This led to prolonged hostilities between Thanjavur and Madurai.

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[1] Thanjavur Nayakas often co-ruled with their fathers as Yuvarajas.

As has already been noted, the Thanjavur Nayakas were renowned for their patronage of literature and the performing arts, which flourished under the Vijayanagar Empire (Seetha 1981: 29–30). The Nayakas themselves composed several works in Telugu and Sanskrit. Raghunatha (1600–34) was known for his various contributions to music: creating new *rāgas*, inventing the modern Sarasvati *vīṇa*, and so on. Vijayaraghava (1633–73), the last Nayaka, also composed more than 30 musical dramas in the *Yakṣagāna* style that comprises various literary forms such as storytelling in verse, dialogues in prose, and songs. Govinda Dikshitar, a minister of the state, and his son, Venkatamakhi, were famous for their contributions to the development of musical grammar.[2]

The southern school of Telugu literature flourished in Thanjavur and other neighbouring states in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries after the fall of Vijayanagar. This school was mainly characterized by the discovery of prose, the development of drama, the absence of ethics, and an excess of erotic expression. The typical theme is *śṛiṅgāra* in dalliance or marriage derived from *madhurabhakti*, which expresses the heroine's devotion to the Lord and longing to unite with the divine hero.[3] The Telugu *padams* of Kshetrayya (Kshetragna) (c. 1600–80) that have survived to date along with dance traditions such as Bharatanāṭyam, Kuchipudi, and Rādhikā-sāntvanam (Appeasing Radha), composed by Muddupalani (c. 1750), a *dēvadāsī* attached to the court of Pratapsimha, are typical examples of this school.[4]

The rule of the Thanjavur Nayakas was challenged by Chokkanatha Nayaka of Madurai who invaded Thanjavur, killed Vijayaraghava, and placed his brother Alagiri on the throne in 1673. A son of Vijayaraghava then solicited aid from the Sultan of Bijapur, whose forces, under the command of the Maratha general Venkoji (alias Ekoji), a half-brother of the great Maratha king Shivaji of the Bhosale dynasty, defeated Alagiri and occupied Thanjavur in 1675. Venkoji (c.1676–84) crowned himself king, ending the rule of the Nayakas and initiating that of the Marathas in Thanjavur. He had three sons who ascended the throne successively: Shahaji (1684–1712), Serfoji I (1712–28), and Tulaja I (alias Tukkoji, 1728–36). During this period, there were frequent battles for the control of the borderlands with Madurai, Ramnad (the Sethupathis), Mysore, and the Mughals. After a period of anarchy following the death of Tulaja I, Pratapsimha (1739–63) ascended the throne. He allied with the Nawab of the Carnatic and helped the British against the French in the Carnatic Wars. Despite his support to the British, in 1762, a treaty signed by Thañjavur, Carnatic, and the British required Pratapsimha to pay tribute and Thanjavur substantially lost its independent status.

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[2] The theory of 72 *melakarthas* developed by Venkatamakhi is widely adopted in today's Carnatic music.

[3] The *śṛiṅgāra-saṅkīrtanas* of Tallapaka Annamacharya (c. 1408 or 1424–1503), an *ācārya* of the Tirumala Venkateshwara Temple, is one of the earliest works with this motif.

[4] With the advent of Victorian moralistic attitudes in public life, these works were devalued as decadent because of their erotic expression, and scholars described this period as one of stagnation or decline (Chenchiah and Rao Bahadur 1988: 86–96; Rao 1933: 128–48). But the *madhurabhakti* tradition that flourished before the British Raj is today being re-evaluated by scholars (Ramanujan et al. 1994: 9–40).

The reign of Tulaja II (1763–87), who succeeded Pratapsimha, saw the political weakening of the Thanjavur Marathas, during which time the substantive rule of Thanjavur changed from native hands to the British Raj. With his surrender to the Nawab of Carnatic and the East India Company, Tulaja II had to pay regular tribute to them for his safety. He had no children and adopted Serfoji from a collateral branch. On Tulaja's death in 1787, Amarasimha (1787–98), son of a concubine of Pratapsimha and regent to Serfoji, seized the throne for himself. Forced to make successive treaties with the British, and having to pay tribute to the Company, which had also started to take over his land, he became apathetic and this led to his deposition and the ascension to the throne of Serfoji II (1798–1832). The latter, however, had to give up the administration of Thanjavur to the British in return for an annual pension and one-fifth of the net revenue, though he was permitted to retain his throne. This caused him to increasingly devote his life to the pursuit of cultural activities. As a result, Thanjavur became famous for its learning. Shivaji II (1833–55) was the only surviving son of Serfoji II. He, in turn, had two daughters and no sons on his death in 1855. Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse came into force and the Maratha rule of Thanjavur came to an end.

The Thanjavur Maratha rulers continued to favour Sanskrit and Telugu literature in addition to that in Marathi. Shahaji was known to be a great litterateur and composer of music. Among his 40 works or more, *Śaṅkara-paḷḷaki-sēva-prabhandam* in Telugu, describing the divine union between the goddess Kamalamba and the Lord Tyagaraja of Tiruvarur, to whom Shahaji was devoted, is a masterpiece.[5] This motif is very similar to *madhurabhakti*, for the development of which the Vaishnavite Nayakas were responsible, though the Marathas basically followed *advaita* philosophy and *śakti* worship. It was the Thanjavur Marathas who protected the Shankaracharya of Kanchi when trouble arose because of Muslim invasion from the north. Marathi *kīrtaṅkars* (singers of *kīrtans*, songs in praise of God) also sought their protection and established their *maṭhas* in Thanjavur. This Maratha religious tradition gave birth to new religious performances such as the *Harikathā-kālakṣēpam* and the *Bhajana-sampradāya.*[6]

Among the Thanjavur Maratha rulers, Serfoji II was the best known for his great patronage of learning. His close friendship with Christian missionaries introduced him to Western science and culture. Friedrich Schwartz (1726–98), a German Protestant missionary who befriended Tulaja II in 1769, was an important person among them. Serfoji II, however, avoided converting to Christianity. He went on a pilgrimage to Kasi and renovated the Bṛhadīśvara temple in his capital.

Serfoji II's love of learning saw the swelling of the collection of the Sarasvati Mahal Library, the Palace Library. He evinced keen interest in its development, and purchased around 4,000 books from abroad, besides sending *pandits* all over India to collect a huge number of books and manuscripts. The range covered was wide—Vedanta philosophy, grammar, music, dance and drama, architecture, astronomy, medicine, training of elephants and horses, and so on. Serfoji II also set up the first Devanagari printing press in south India, using stone types. His Durbar Hall was decorated with oil paintings of Maratha rulers of Thanjavur (see Figure 7.2). He constructed several choultries and began the practice of feeding the poor, set up a small museum of old coins, and founded the Dhanavantri Mahal, where physicians researched both Western and Indian systems of medicine, besides renovating the Sangita Mahal, an auditorium known for its great acoustics.

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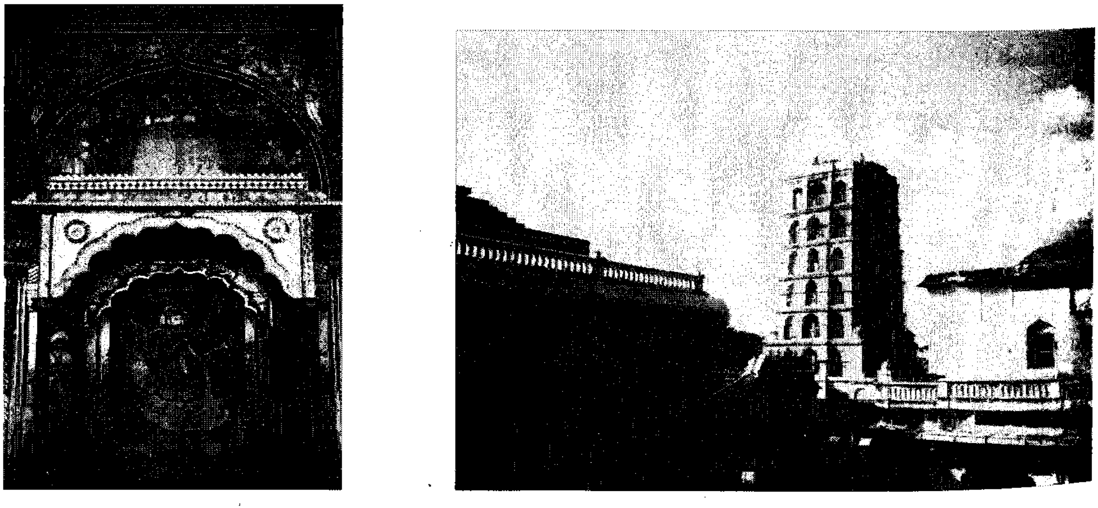
[5] This composition had been enacted by *dēvadāsīs* attached to the Tyagaraja temple till the first half of the twentieth century. The tradition finally came to an end with the abolition of the *dēvadāsī* system (Kuppuswamy 1977: 23–35).

[6] The *Harikathā-kālakṣepam* is a religious discourse comprising storytelling, poetry, music, drama, dance, and philosophy, and *Bhajana-sampradāya* is the singing of *kīrtanas* and *nāmāvalis* (songs composed of Gods' names) in a specific order.

Serfoji II was not only a patron of music and dance but was himself also a composer. He established the 'Tanjore Band', a military ensemble that featured both Indian and Western musical instruments, and composed music for it. And as for Carnatic music, this period was dubbed the 'golden era' of this genre by latter-day scholars and connoisseurs. The Trinity of Carnatic music (Tyagaraja [1767–1847], Muttuswami Dikshitar [1775–1835], and Syama Sastri [1762–1827], three contemporary saint-musicians said to hail from Tiruvarur) belong to this period. They composed their works either in Telugu or Sanskrit. Devotional songs called *kritis* composed by Tyagaraja form the largest part of the repertoire of Carnatic music today.[7]

Thanjavur painting, one of the major classical south Indian schools, is characterized by the gilded and gem-set technique on wooden panels. These paintings had centrally placed sacred icons of the Hindu deities with clear outlines and in vivid colours. Variations on this iconic style were also practised in neighbouring areas such as Mysore and Andhra for about two


a

b

Figure 7.2 (a) Audience Hall of the Maratha Palace in Thanjavur and (b) Maratha Palace with a Tower in Thanjavur

Source: Courtesy of Takako Inoue.

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[7] Among his 1,000 or more devotional songs, almost all in praise of Lord Rama, about 600–800 compositions have been handed down to us. In addition to these songs, Tyagaraja composed two musical plays in Telugu. His famous compositions called the *Pañcaratna Kritis* are sung at his *ārādhanā* celebrations every year.

hundred years, c.1700–1900. The most favourite iconography of the Thanjavur style was the Navanita Krishna (child Krishna as the 'butter thief'). The technique of glass painting popularized by Chinese artists probably reached India in the second half of the eighteenth century. The Thanjavur school of glass painting, which mostly followed the patterns of local iconic paintings, continued till the beginning of the twentieth century. It is also worth mentioning that a number of portraits of Maratha kings and other important personages were produced in the gold ornamented style used for sacred pictures (Appasamy 1980).

B. Natarajan describes the cultural history of Thanjavur as a 'fusion of cultures' (Natarajan 1988: 1–54), a straightforward expression of the historical experiences in this region. The Telugu culture of Vijayanagar due to the Nayakas developed on the basis of traditional Tamil culture fostered in the Chola period, the Marathi culture introduced by the Marathas, and the Western knowledge brought by the Europeans. Together it constituted an amalgam of various traditions. Thus the dynasties in Thanjavur, with their religious tolerance, contributed substantially to cultural activity though they subsequently surrendered the state to the British and had to give up their political power and administrative rights. These characteristics of Thanjavur contrast with those after the British rule, where each community stands separated by its own identity.

7.1.5 Successor State: Travancore

TOSHIE AWAYA

In recent years, there have been lively debates about the nature and meaning of various regional powers (so-called successor states) that became prominent in the eighteenth century after the decline of the Mughal Empire. The attempt to understand the emergence of Travancore under Marthanda Varma (1729–58) as a 'modern' state could be located within these debates.

Marthanda Varma ascended the throne in 1729, when he was only 23, following the matrilineal system of succession (see Figure 7.3). Travancore society at the time had reached one of its most tumultuous periods, when the authority of the king himself was not stable. In fact, Marthanda's ascension to the throne was challenged by the sons of the former king. They claimed the throne on the basis of the patrilineal principle, but were defeated by Marthanda Varma. There were others too who contested his kingship, such as the *yōgakkārs* (a Brahmin group that managed the Padmanabhaswami Temple), traditional local chieftains, and powerful landlords (called *māḍampis*, *piḷḷamārs*, and so on). K. N. Ganesh, specializing in the history of medieval Kerala, argues that the anarchy characterizing early eighteenth-century Travancore was a result of the ascendancy of the intermediary social stratum composed of *māḍampis* and *piḷḷamārs* against the background of the development of the monetary economy and the commercialization of agriculture (Ganesh 1990).

The area under the Travancore native state during the British period was a result of Marthanda Varma's aggressive policy of territorial expansion. When he ascended the throne, his territory, called Venad, was limited to the southern part of present-day Kerala and included the Tamil-dominated area of Nanjanadu as well. The expansion was realized through integration of various family branches and the annexation of independent chiefdoms. K. M. Panikkar asserts that the annexation of the territories of

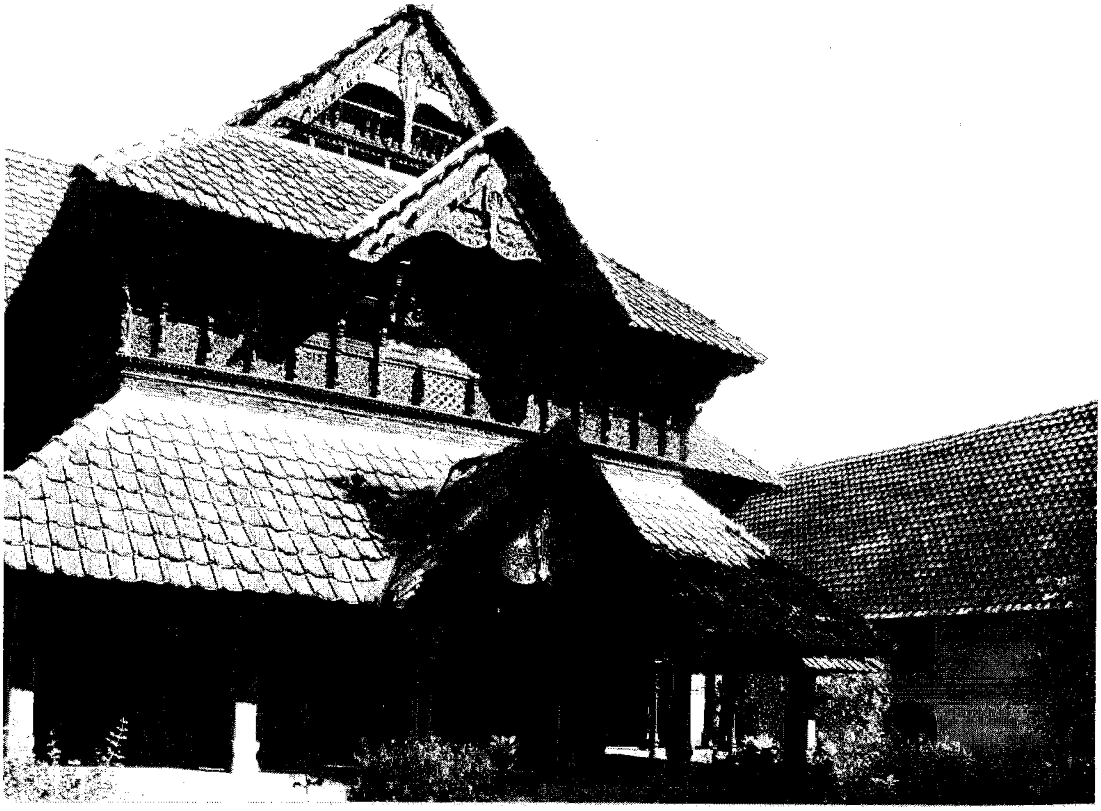

Figure 7.3 Audience Hall of the Marthanda Varma's Palace at Padmanabhapuram
Source: Courtesy of Takeo Kamiya.

defeated chieftains was not part of the 'tradition' of Keralite politics. Whether it was 'traditional' or not, Marthanda Varma's territorial ambition illustrates a new trend.

The unification of the state and its territorial expansion required a great amount of capital, and modern weaponry. As far as military resources were concerned, Marthanda introduced a mercenary army composed of Maravas from the Tamil-speaking area, while Europeans were employed as military advisers. One famous example of the latter was that of De Lannoy, who shifted his loyalty after the Battle of Colachel (1741) in which Marthanda Varma defeated the army of the Dutch East India Company. Modern weapons were purchased from the English, who were based in Anjengo, and after the treaty with the Dutch in 1753, from the latter as well. The income derived from the pepper trade played a crucial role in the purchase of weapons.

To raise money to support this aggressive policy, economic reforms were essential. One of the notable policies was the establishment of a monopoly of some trade goods such as pepper, cardamom, and salt. In the 1740s, Marthanda established a trade depot at Mavelikkara, a famous pepper-producing area.

The traditional revenue of kings or chieftains in Kerala is said to have derived from customs, tolls, and various fines other than rent from their own landed property. Introducing the first land settlement in 1729–40, Marthanda tried to establish the land revenue system. In an effort to increase agricultural production, irrigation work was promoted in Nanjanadu.

In 1750, Marthanda donated his territory to the deity at the Padmanabhaswami Temple, an act in line with the idea that the king would rule the land as a servant/representative of the deity. It would, however, be naïve if we take this as a kind of atonement for his sins or as proof of his piety; rather it should be interpreted as a political project aiming to justify his rule that extended beyond the realm of secular authority.

In order to establish his status as a twice-born Kshatriya, Marthanda also conducted several rituals, such as *hiranyagarbham*, with the help of Brahmins. His renovation of the Padmanabhaswami Temple, the establishment of *ūṭṭupuras* (institutions to provide Brahmins with free meals), and the starting of *murajapam* (a 56-day ceremony of Vedic chanting by Brahmins) should be regarded as recourse to *dharma rājya* to maintain Travancore as a 'Hindu state'.

The policy pursued during the rule of Marthanda Varma consisted in the strengthening of military force as well as the establishment of a strong fiscal system. In this sense, the description of military fiscalism that Burton Stein mooted for Mysore state (Stein 1985) might be applied to eighteenth-century Travancore as well. At the same time, as Das Gupta's concept of 'trade state' implies (Das Gupta 1967), the state structure in Kerala (including Travancore) after the sixteenth century had a strong connection with the development of foreign trade.[8] On the ideological plane, he wanted to maintain the tradition of Hindu kingship for his state. Travancore under Marthanda Varma, therefore, can be characterized as a state based on the ideology of orthodox Hinduism while aspiring, under his kingship, to be equipped with a 'modern' system of military and financial administration. Even though territorial expansion was checked by the rise of the power of Mysore in Kerala after the demise of Marthanda Varma, Travancore maintained her independence as a native state under British sovereignty through the treaties of 1795 and 1805.

Lastly, it is necessary to mention the other local powers in Kerala such as the Zamorin of Calicut (Kozhikode) and the Cochin Raja, who were prominent before the British established their rule in this area. The Mysore army overran all the *rajas*/chieftains in the northern part of Kerala, including the Zamorin who had become one of the most powerful and well-known powers on the Malabar coast by the thirteenth century. This historical circumstance resulted in the chieftains losing their independence because their territories were handed over to the British by Tipu through the Treaty of Seringapatam of 1792. On the other hand, the precarious independence of the Cochin Raja was maintained even as Cochin became a native state under the British by way of the subsidiary treaties of 1791 and 1809. Thus, the destinies of these local powers were decided by the aggressive military policy pursued by Mysore state under Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan, especially the latter.

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[8] It is, therefore, worthwhile, to compare the state formation with the 'port-states' of Southeast Asia (Kathirithamby-Wells and Villiers 1990).

7.1.6 Economy and Society

NOBUHIRO OTA

South India witnessed frequent change of hegemonic powers and a series of large-scale campaigns from the second half of the seventeenth to the eighteenth century. It is generally true that wars and political instability are accompanied by plunder, destruction, and obstruction of free traffic. But, at least based on historical documents discovered so far, it cannot be said that economic activities such as trade and handicrafts manufacturing in south India were badly affected by the disturbances caused by war during this period. On the contrary, at least in some parts of south India, the economy was growing at least partly due to the expansion of European maritime trade and merchants and artisans were engaged actively in their respective fields, sometimes developing wide networks by themselves.

During the second half of the seventeenth century when the export of Indian cotton textiles to European markets surged sharply, the demand for raw cotton also increased (see Figure 7.4). Consequently, the inland areas endowed with soils suitable for cotton cultivation, such as Madurai and Baramahal, were developed and more and more raw cotton came to be transported from these areas to textile producing centres mostly situated on the coast of the Bay of Bengal (Chaudhuri 1974: 177). To meet the ever-increasing demand for raw cotton, supply networks expanded far into the middle-western and the northern part of the Deccan Plateau (Arasaratnam 1996: 49–50; Alam and Subrahmanyam 1998).

Besides cotton, pepper, sugar cane, and areca nut were cultivated in large volumes as cash crops. The cultivation of tobacco, brought by the Europeans from the Americas, started and soon spread to the inland areas. Along the Malabar coast, the production of coir fibres from

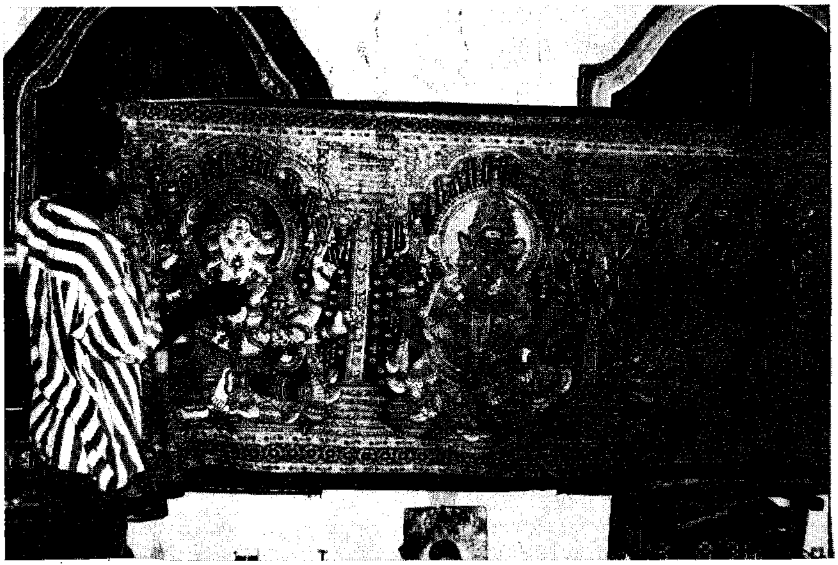

Figure 7.4 Kalamkari Cotton Cloth Still Produced in Kalahasti
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

coconuts increased after the Portuguese settled there and coir was exported to many places in the vicinity of the Indian Ocean. Rice, a staple grain in south India, was also traded in considerable amounts and transported from natural rice granaries such as the Canara region, via coastal trade routes, to cities and areas inside and outside south India.

As commerce and industries industry came to be carried on involving widely separated places and areas, various extensive networks of merchants and artisans were (re-)organized to cut across political boundaries. Although 'groups' of merchants were known to have existed from the early days of south Indian history, prototypes of merchant 'castes' of the colonial and postcolonial period appeared, though fragmentarily, only in historical documents belonging to this period (Rudner 1987). To strengthen identities and solidarities of respective groups, origin myths were (re-)created and temples enshrining common deities functioned as rallying points in some cases.

Caste-like groups of merchants and artisans did not, however, seem to maintain surveillance over the economic activities of their members. Controlling the volume of manufacture or trade, product quality, and commodity price was not among their activities. In this respect they were different from guilds in Medieval Europe. There were indeed occasions when extensive networks of certain artisans helped organize collective resistance when they perceived their interests to be threatened by heavy taxation or compulsory purchase of their products. But essentially the solidarity of respective artisan groups seems to have been social and ritual (Ramaswamy 1985: 426–7; Parthasarathi 2001: 109–13).

Let us next look at rural society. Villages in south India, except those situated in hilly regions, were neither self-sufficient nor self-contained. Agricultural activities and daily administration were conducted in close collaboration and interaction with neighbouring villages. Division of work was highly developed and various goods and services necessary for production productive activities like agriculture were obtainable mostly from those living in and around a village. Provision of goods and services in a particular village was recognized as a sort of right and only those who had the rights could provide them. Providers of goods and services, generically called 'village servants' in English or *āyagāras* in Kannada, were given as their fees a fixed proportion of harvests, particularly grain harvests, in addition to revenue-free lands. *Zamindars* who carried out daily administrative tasks in a group of villages also took as their remuneration a fixed proportion of the revenue collected, besides enjoying revenue-free villages and lands. Offices of these *āyagāras* and *zamindars*, along with the remuneration attached to them, were generally inheritable and it was not rare that they were sold.

Thus economic activities, administration, and public order in rural society were sustained under the leadership of those who had hereditary rights to carry out specified duties and receive fees for them. Such structures of local societies are described or recorded in detail in early colonial documents, but it remains to be clarified when and how these structures were established in south India.[9] The historical genesis of hereditary 'servants' like *āyagāras* who had leading roles in maintaining them, along with the details of their functions, should be further explored in future research. How to relate these seemingly community-based rights to the development of a market economy during this period is also an important topic that needs to be studied.

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[9] 'Jaghire—Barnard's Survey Accounts' prepared by an English surveyor in the late eighteenth century contained very minute information about the fees distributed to various village servants and others, along with details of revenue administration at the village level in the Chingleput region (then called Jaghire). Mizushima (1996), drawing on comprehensive analysis of the statistical data recorded in those accounts, delineated how the local society of pre-colonial south India sustained itself, giving to that mechanism the name of 'the *mirāsi* system'.

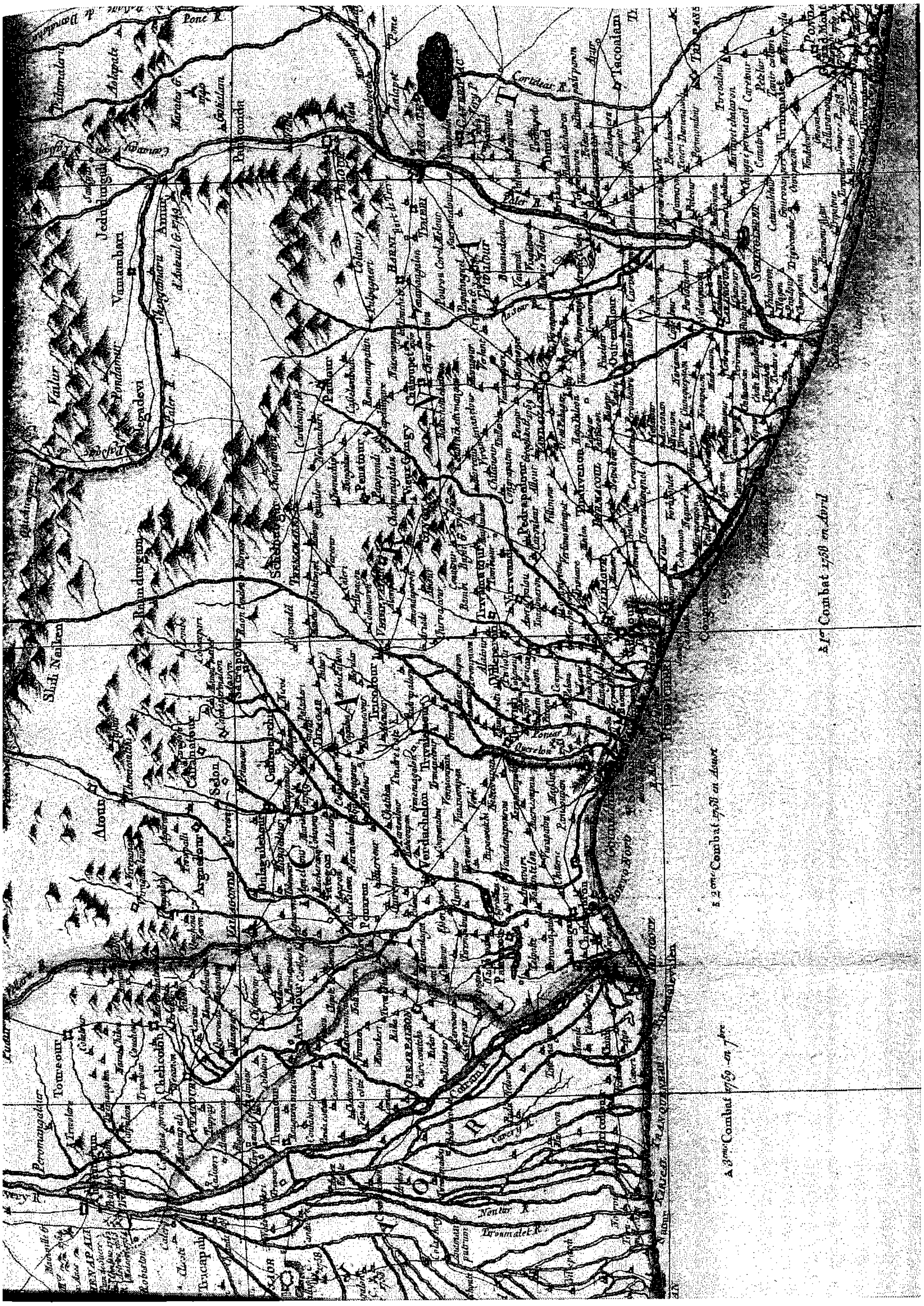
After the mid-seventeenth century, south India witnessed a series of wars but was by no means decaying culturally, nor was it in decline. At the courts of regional rulers like the Thanjavur Maratha kings and the Mysore kings, an abundance of literature was produced in Sanskrit and in the vernacular languages. Literary activities were not confined to high elites at royal courts. During this period relatively many histories, describing the pasts of particular regions or kingdoms, were written by clerks who also conducted practical business and were responsible for recordkeeping in the administrative apparatuses. These histories were mostly in prose rich in colloquial expression and contained, according to recent studies, their own perspectives or sense of values different from those of court elites (Narayana Rao, Shulman, and Subrahmanyam 2001). Another literary genre developing outside royal courts was the *cāṭṭu*, which contained elements of a sort of literary critique (Narayana Rao and Shulman 1998). About the socio-economic bases of those local elites who led and patronized literary activities outside courts, much remains to be clarified. But it can be pointed out that the growth of intermediary officials occupying the strata between states and cultivating peasants, along with the rise of merchants and artisans, contributed in some way to the flourishing of culturally creative space outside both courts and temples.

7.2 COLONIZATION OF SOUTH INDIA: THE EAST INDIA COMPANIES AND THE WARS

7.2.1 The Fortunes of the Native Powers and the Carnatic Wars

NOBUHIRO OTA

During the first half of the eighteenth century, practically independent regional states of southern India intermittently fought among themselves. In the 1740s, disputes erupted consecutively over the succession in two of the most important regional states, namely the Nizamship of Hyderabad and the Nawabship of Arcot. These two disputes soon amalgamated into one and developed into a large-scale war, with other political powers gradually being drawn into it. Both the English and the French intervened for their own reasons. The English gained a foothold for territorial expansion in the south, when their close ally, Muhammad Ali, succeeded as Nawab. It is improbable that the upper echelons of the English East India Company intended to colonize south India at this time. But, as it continued to intervene in quarrels among native powers to protect its own interests, it ended up establishing hegemony in the region. When describing the political history of south India during the second half of the eighteenth century, it is quite common to focus on diplomatic manoeuvres and struggles between the English East India Company, on the one hand, and the native powers and the French on the other. But it should be remembered that, in between wars directly involving the English, military confrontations, major and minor, occurred almost incessantly among native powers, including the Maratha Confederacy, the Nizams, and the Mysore kingdom.

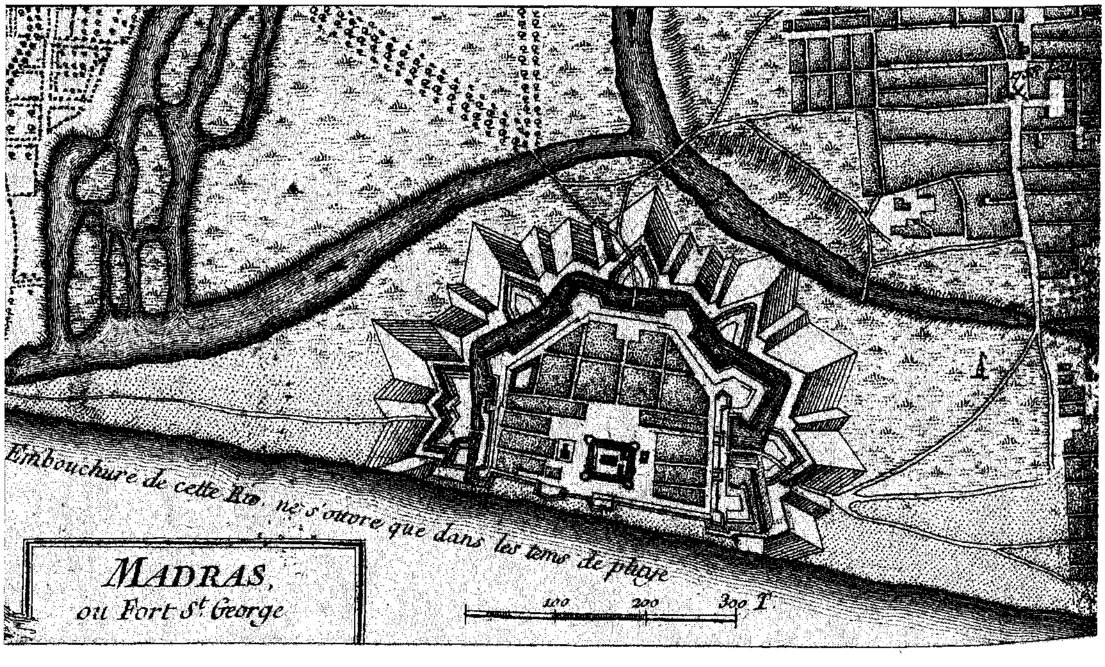

A 1er Combat 1758 en Avril
A 2eme Combat 1758 en Aout
A 3eme Combat 1759 en 7bre

Map 7.2 Map Showing the Battlefields in Carnatic Wars and Published in Paris in 1770 (a Part)

Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima, who owns the map.

The English were just one of those powers who were occasionally impacted by the politico-military dynamics of south India and they sometimes utilized it for their own ends.

An armed clash between the English and French commenced in India when the War of the Austrian Succession broke out in Europe in 1740. In the beginning, both countries took military action only at sea, because the Nawab of Arcot had banned such confrontations on land. The French, however, occupied Madras in September 1746. The Nawab, taking this as a serious offence, attacked the French but, overwhelmed by the latter's superior firearms, was forced to retreat. When the War of the Austrian Succession ended in Europe in 1748, the French and English also arrived at a peace agreement in India and Madras was returned to the English. Though the Nawab had intervened midway, this confrontation, known as the First Carnatic War, was basically between the English and French and did not influence the local politics of southern India very much (see Maps 7.2 and 7.3). At Arcot, since 1740 when the Maratha army killed Nawab Dost Ali, disputes over succession had continued. The political turmoil, fuelled by the intervention of the Maratha Confederacy and the Nizam, did not die down until Anwar-ud-din became Nawab in 1744. Though the disputes over succession took place exactly at the time of the military clash between the English and French, which occurred in and around the Nawab's territory, these two conflicts did not directly impact each other. But the First Carnatic War provided both the French and English in India with an opportunity to equip themselves with substantial armies consisting mainly of Indian mercenaries trained in European-style military drills. Backed by newly acquired superior military power, they


Embouchure de cette Riv. ne s'ouvre que dans les tems de pluye
MADRAS,
ou Fort S.t George
100
200
300 T.

Map 7.3 Fort St George. A Part of a Map Published in Paris in 1770
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima, who owns the map.

began to intervene in struggles among native powers to promote their own interests.

Soon after the ceasefire between the English and French came into effect, a succession dispute occurred again at Arcot. At the same time, there was similar trouble in the Nizam's family as well, and these two disputes became entangled and developed into a large-scale, prolonged war in which other native powers of south India participated, each pursuing their own agendas. Both the English and French, looking to consolidate their strength, also took part in what came to be known as the Second Carnatic War, the end of which saw the Nizamship going to the pro-French Salabat Jang and the Nawabship to the pro-English Muhammad Ali. The English support to the latter was on the condition that he would reimburse the expenditure. Therefore, victory came to Muhammad Ali by way of an enormous debt.

Armed conflict between the English and French resumed in 1756 when the Seven Years War, of which the Third Carnatic War (1756–63) was a part, broke out. The French recalled an elite corps under the command of Marquis de Bussy from the Nizam's domain and prevailed at an early stage in the war, encircling Madras. But soon the situation changed to the advantage of the English and fighting ended in south India when the French, besieged in Pondicherry, surrendered. The politico-military influence of the defeated French declined substantially and the Nizam, till then their ally, became close to the English. As for the Nawab of Arcot, the English again claimed that they had fought the war to protect his position and dominion and sought reimbursement of the expenditure. Thus Nawab Muhammad Ali's debts piled up, plunging the finances into deep crisis and inviting some kind of countermeasures by the English.

7.2.2 The Rise of the Mysore Kingdom and the Mysore Wars

NOBUHIRO OTA

In the 1760s, politics entered another stage. The Nizams, facing a serious challenge from the Maratha Confederacy in north Deccan, gradually lost influence in south India. The Nawab of Arcot, with enormous debts, could not afford to wage a war against neighbouring states on his own. Superseding these two successor states was the Mysore kingdom, which came to occupy an important place in southern politics and provoked military confrontations with both the Maratha Confederacy and the English.

In the 1750s, Mysore, repeatedly invaded by the Maratha troops, was forced to pay tribute and cede some parts of its territory to the Peshwas. The political crisis further deepened when a prolonged siege of Tiruchirappalli by its own troops failed. At this critical moment, Hyder Ali rose from being a commander of mercenary troops to become the de facto ruler. With the reins of government securely in his grasp in 1761, he extended his territory by conquering neighbouring states such as those of the Nayakas of Keladi. In August 1767, he formed a league with his sworn enemy, the Nizam, and invaded the Tamil country to defeat the Nawab. The war did not go well for the Nawab and his allies, the English. The Mysore army penetrated deep into the Tamil country in what came to be known as the First Anglo-Mysore War, besieging Madras in late March of 1769. To extricate themselves from the mess, the English negotiated a ceasefire with Hyder Ali at Madras in April (see Figure 7.5).

In the 1770s, Hyder Ali directed his military expansion towards the north and provoked confrontations with the Peshwa government. When the Maratha troops withdrew from

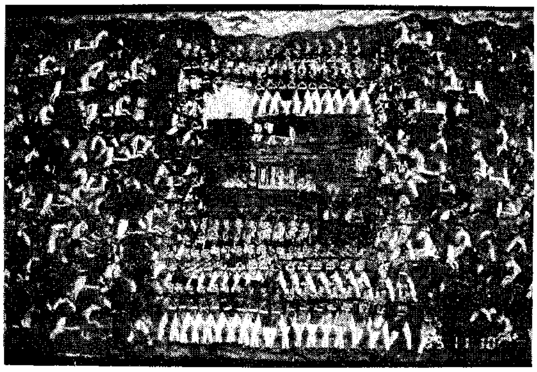


Figure 7.5 Mural Depicting the Battle of Pullalur in Tipu's Summer Palace in Seringapatam
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

southern India to fight the First Anglo-Maratha War in north Deccan in the late 1770s, Hyder extended his territory to the banks of the Tungabhadra River. In 1780, Nana Phadnavis, trying to effect a breakthrough in the ongoing war against the English, formed the Anti-English League with Hyder Ali and the latter, keeping his promise, invaded the Tamil country again in May that year. Though the First Anglo-Maratha War ended with the Treaty of Salbai in May 1782, Hyder continued his war against the English until his death in December that year. Tipu Sultan, his son and successor, carried on the Second Anglo-Mysore War, which concluded in a ceasefire at Mangalore in March 1784 after a see-saw combat.

In the late 1780s, the northern campaign by the Mysore troops resumed under the command of Tipu, reinforcing a sense of danger among both the Peshwa and the Nizam. Finding a common enemy in Tipu, the English, the Marathas, and the Nizam united to invade Mysore in 1790 (the Third Anglo-Mysore War). Tipu was soundly defeated and forced to cede about half of the kingdom's territory to them. The defeat brought to a standstill the military expansionism of the Mysore kingdom.

After the end of the war Tipu, striving to make up for a significant decrease inland revenue due to the cession of such a large part of his territory, set up stricter surveillance over officials to eradicate corruption in revenue administration. To secure revenue, he also established a government monopoly over the trade in certain products like pepper, sandalwood, and cardamom. It is well known that Tipu had a keen interest in promoting trade, especially maritime, with foreign countries. From the late 1780s, factories were established at various sites both within and outside the kingdom. Products collected through a network of domestic factories were sent to foreign markets through overseas factories such as those at Muscat, Hormuz, Jeddah, and Pegu, or sold to Armenians and other merchants from friendly countries like the Bu Said state of Oman. The navy that Tipu is known to have endeavoured to rebuild in the 1790s may have been meant not just for opposing British naval power but also for protecting vessels carrying commodities (Habib1999: 172). Before the Third Anglo-Mysore War, Tipu had sent an envoy to France to obtain military support.[10] He never gave up soliciting military aid from the French—even after the defeat—and in 1797 sent a mission to Mauritius (then called 'Isle de France') asking the French to dispatch an army to India. Based on a totally false lead that a large French army was stationed in Mauritius, the mission not only failed as a matter of course but also gave the British the rationale for eliminating Tipu.

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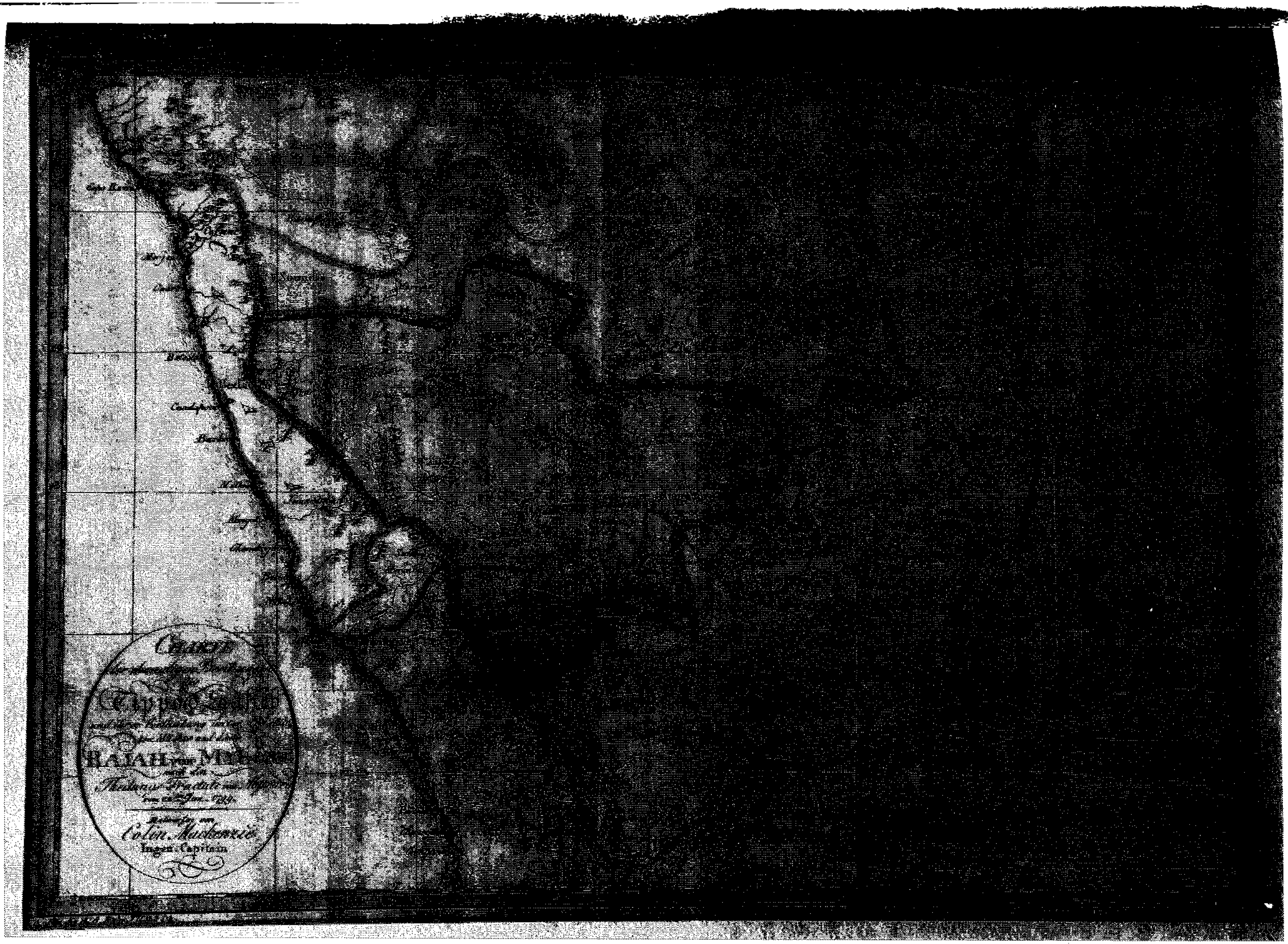
[10] Tipu also sent out a mission to the Ottoman Empire in the late 1780s to serve both economic and political purposes. In order to strengthen his position against the Peshwas and the Nizams, whose political claims were supported by the authority of the Mughals (both of them were, at least nominally, high-ranking *mansabdars* of the Mughal emperors), Tipu wanted his power and status to be legitimized by the authority of the Ottoman Caliph (Özcan1997: 11–13).


Charte
RAJAH von M
Colin Mackenzie
Ingen. Capitain

Map 7.4 Map Showing the Result of the Mysore Wars, Published in 1799
Source: Courtesy of Toshiaki Ohji, who owns the map.

The English East India Company while fighting the Anglo-Mysore Wars became deeply drawn into the domestic administration of south India. The Nawab of Arcot's financial crisis also deepened as he had accumulated huge debts to the Company and to English individuals. The debts increased also because the English fought the Anglo-Mysore Wars ostensibly for his sake. Fearing that the fiscal crisis would cause the collapse of the Nawab's government, the English imposed treaties to take over responsibility for its revenue administration. Immediately after the end of the Third Anglo-Mysore War in 1792, the English concluded another treaty with the Nawab to make Mysore a de facto protectorate (Phillips 1985, 1986).

Though the Peshwa and the Nizam united to fight against Tipu, once the Third Anglo-Mysore War ended in their victory, they went back to being mutual enemies. In March 1795, the Maratha Confederacy defeated the Nizam at the Battle of Kharda and compelled him to give up Daulatabad. Faced with the ascendancy of the Marathas, the Nizam finally chose to survive as a subordinate ally of the English. In 1798, Nizam Ali Khan amended the treaty with the English to increase both the number of English troops stationed in his domain and the expense he would bear for them. This treaty made it apparent that the Nizam was now under full protection of the English.

In 1799, the English finally eliminated Tipu, their only remaining adversary in south India (the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War), and enthroned, at Mysore, Mummadi Krishna Raja, a boy of the Hindu royal family deposed by Tipu. They also imposed a treaty to make Mysore a de facto protectorate of the English. Furthermore, in 1801, the English officially stripped Nawab Azim-ud-Daula of Arcot of his administrative powers, alleging that his predecessor, the late Nawab Umdat-ul-Umra, had been in secret communication with Tipu during the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War. Thus the territorial organization of English colonial rule of south India, comprising the directly ruled Madras Presidency and the protectorate domains (princely states), was consolidated (see Map 7.4).

It would not be correct to attribute the final victory of the English solely to its European-style military forces imbued with discipline through modern drill. Indian states soon adopted such European military practices and processes, even as the English had to learn and master traditional Indian cavalry tactics during the course of the Anglo-Mysore Wars (Barua 1994: 600–4; cf. Gordon 1998). Various factors contributed to the success of the English in south India, such as their tactful diplomacy, their loyalty to the flag, and their overwhelming naval power which enabled quick and unfailing supply of weaponry and provisions from other regions of India in critical moments such as wars.

7.3 INCORPORATION INTO THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

TSUKASA MIZUSHIMA

7.3.1 The Development of the Market Economy

In contrast to pre-sixteenth-century European visitors, the European commercial powers making inroads into India from the seventeenth century onwards sought to operate far more regularly and in an organized manner. Their choice of exportable items from the subcontinent was no longer diamonds and other precious stones but predominantly cotton textiles. As European textiles could not match the quality, design, and colour that were characteristic of Indian cotton textiles, the latter were enthusiastically accepted by European markets. Because of their high profitability, northwestern European countries, one after another, started founding from the beginning of the seventeenth century companies

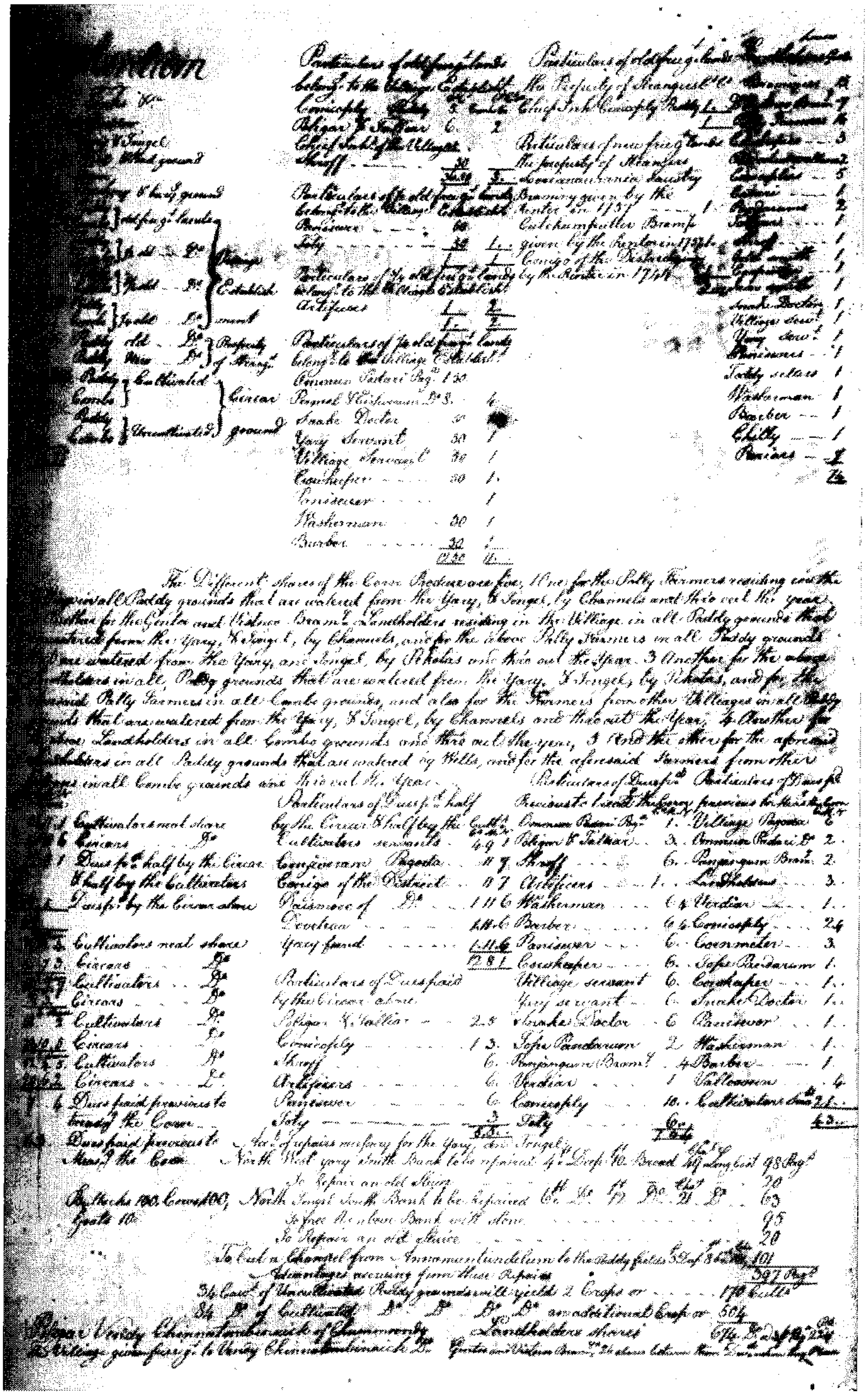


Figure 7.6 A Page of Barnard Report Showing Fee Sharing
Source: Courtesy of Tsukasa Mizushima.

trading to the East (Chaudhuri 1978; Bowen 2007; Banerji 1974; Prakash 1998; Arasaratnam 1994, 1995; Manning 1996).[11]

There has been a lot of debate among historians on the characterization of the transition between the end of the Mughal period and the establishment of British colonial rule (Alavi 2002; Marshall 2003). As for the development of maritime trade, it doubtless had great impact both upon India and Europe.

The most important effect on India was clearly the rise of the textile industry. The addition of European markets to the existing textile markets spread over the Indian Ocean world demanded much larger supplies and caused a chain of changes. Starting with the development of cotton cultivation in the countryside, not only did the numbers of cultivators increase, so too did those of cotton-refiners, spinners, weavers, dyers, washers, merchants, transporters, and many others engaged in textile-related industry and trade. An analysis of village accounts of the 1770s collected by Thomas Barnard, an English surveyor of the East India Company, shows that weavers comprised 6.4 per cent (4,011 houses), cotton-refiners 0.1 per cent (85 houses), and traders and bankers 6.9 per cent (4,312 houses) out of a total 62,529 households in around 2,300 hamlets in the *jagir* (Bajaj and Srinivas 1995) (see Figure 7.6).[12] Another source from the early nineteenth century shows that the number of weaving looms in the *jagir* was 3,075.[13] An investigation into their spatial distribution indicated in Table 7.1 shows that they

Table 7.1 Spatial Distribution of Looms in the Jagir

No. of Looms in the Hamlet	No. of Hamlets	Name of Hamlet	Magan (sub-district)	District
nil	2,148			
1–5	61			
6–10	30			
11–20	25			
21–50	20			
51–100	7			
103	1	Vistnoocunchee	Vistnoocunchee	Conjiveram
145	1	Caroomundlum	Chinnapulacavary	Ponnary
183	1	Arpollam	Sevacunchee	Conjiveram
193	1	Shakepettah, Ninahpettah	Sevacunchee	Conjiveram
248	1	Iyempettah	Iyempettah	Conjiveram
361	1	Pillapollam	Sevacunchee	Conjiveram
Total	2,297			

Source: Prepared by Mizushima from the Zamindari Statement, Statement relating to Permanent Settlement of Jagir forwarded as Enclosures to Mr Greenway's Letter, 29 March 1801. *Permanent Settlement Records*, vols 20–2, in Board's Revenue Miscellaneous Record, Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Note: Spellings are as in the original source.

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[11] For European companies trading with India, see Prakash (1998).

[12] An area surrounding Madras, this *jagir* came to be called Chingleput in the colonial period.

[13] Zamindari Statement, Statement relating to Permanent Settlement of Jagir forwarded as enclosures to Mr Greenway's Letter, 29 March 1801. *Permanent Settlement Records*, vols 20–2, in Board's Revenue Miscellaneous Record, Tamilnadu State Archives.

were highly concentrated in certain weaving villages, especially in and around Kanchipuram (spelled 'Conjiveram' in Table 7.1). Labour spared for the overseas textile market must have been intensified too. More and more weavers became full-timers, even though a majority of spinners, usually womenfolk, remained largely part-timers.[14] We know that the increasing labour intensification and labour shortage caused degradation in the quality of products and became critically problematic later from the mid-eighteenth century.[15]

7.3.2 Asian and European Market Relations

Another important impact that was related to the first was the development of the market economy facilitated by the inflow of bullion from Europe to India. Bullion like gold, silver, and copper was brought into the country in great quantities during this period, as indicated by studies of the Dutch, French, Ostend, Danish, Swedish, and English East India companies. Japanese copper was also imported through the intra-Asian commodity exchange that was mainly handled by the Dutch (Shimada 2006). European companies were eager to obtain minting rights from Indian rulers and circulated currencies according to their needs. The increase in circulation of currency greatly boosted the cash economy during this period.

The development of the commodity exchange facilitated by the textile industry and by the inflow of bullion began changing the nature of the indigenous economic structure as well. The basic economic structure observed in the south and other parts of India during the early modern period was a subsistence economy in which producers and functionaries in the localities were incorporated in a share-distribution system. Cultivators, shepherds, carpenters, smiths, priests, washermen, barbers, watchmen, and many other functionaries performed specific assigned roles in their respective localities, and each of them received a certain share of the total local produce. What was unique in the system was that the link between the role and the share was thought to be a sort of property—called *mirāsi, vatan*, and so on—that was inheritable, and sometimes, mortgageable or even saleable, though generally transacted within the same community called *jāti*. The uniqueness was also observed in its continuity through the ages. Whenever a new industry or new function was born or generated in a locality, a new share in the whole produce was created and allocated to the person/s engaged in the new occupation without breaking the system. We may call it an involution. This kind of system was widely observed in different parts of India (H. Kotani et al. 2008: 31–49). Though the system was termed differently in different parts of early modern India, the early British administrators stationed in Madras termed it as *mirāsi* system (Mizushima 1996).

Though the origin and the historical processes of the formation of the *mirāsi* system are yet to be clarified, an important feature of this period was that it incorporated within it neither textile traders nor producers. Records showing the lists of recipients of shares in the produce do not include them. It is probable that weavers, traders and others in the textile industry did supply their products within the *mirāsi* system and were originally incorporated in the subsistence economy. With the development of textile production and trade, however, those in the textile industry moved away from it and joined or were forced to join the thriving market economy of the period. At any rate, south Indian society during this period shows the co-existence of the subsistence economy characterized as the *mirāsi* system and the highly developed market economy, though the balance was apparently tilting in favour of the latter.

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[14] There existed some professional spinners producing the highest quality yarn among the Pariah community ('Diary of Proceedings on a Journey through the Paykets or Weaving Villages in the Hon'ble Company Jaghier', Fort St. George, *Public Department Consultations*, 2 December 1771 [IOL P/240/32]: not paginated). They were, however, summarily categorized as 'the Untouchables' and yet to be categorized as a distinct community having special skills (Mizushima 2009). The importance of female spinners in the Indian economy is discussed by Wendt (2009) and Parthasarathi (2009).

[15] As for cloth degradation and the Company's measures to tackle the problem, see Parthasarathi (2001).

The development of the market economy, led by the textile industry and its trade, was noted in trade in agricultural commodities as well.[16] This can be easily understood if we observe the rapid development of port towns like Madras and Pondicherry during the period (see Figure 7.7 and Map 7.5).[17] Port towns under the European commercial powers attracted large populations from the hinterlands. Populations in Madras and in Pondicherry were estimated to be around 150,000 and 50,000 respectively in the mid-eighteenth century.[18] An increased urban population signified the growth of the urban consumption market for agricultural commodities transported from rural areas. People in the locality, especially those having a higher share in the *mirāsi* system and therefore having some surplus for sale, were now looking for opportunities not within their subsistence economies but in the developing agricultural market linked with urban centres. South India was thus experiencing unprecedented transformation in the eighteenth century.

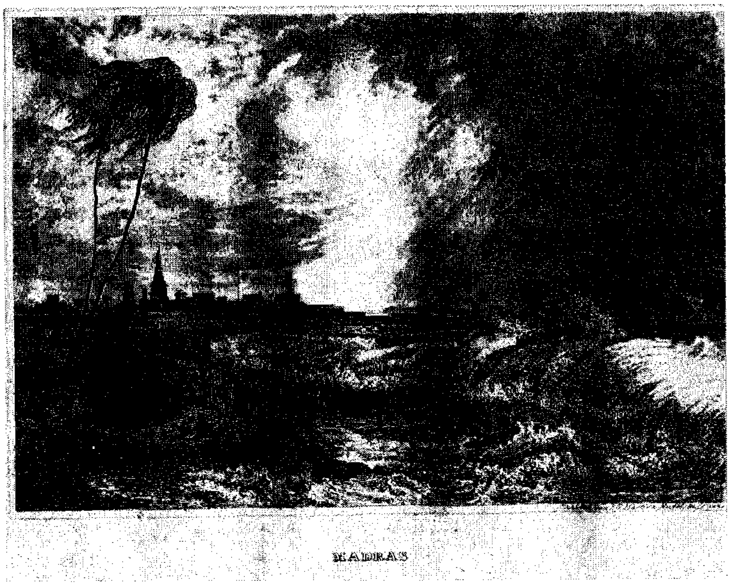

Figure 7.7 Eighteenth-Century Etching Depicting Madras Beach
Source: Courtesy of the owner, Noboru Karashima.

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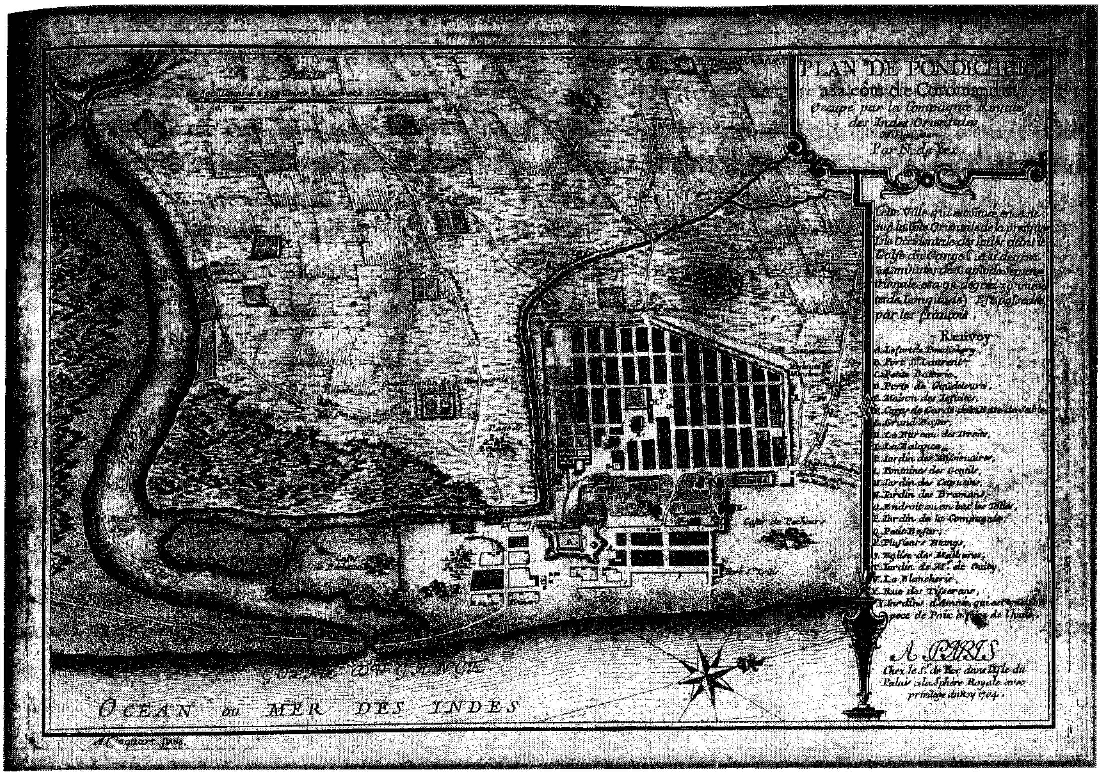
[16] Views on the grain trade and its historical significance in the period have been articulated by Datta (1986) and Banerjee (1986).

[17] For the increase in population in port towns in India during the period, see Bayly (1988).

[18] There are a good number of estimates on the urban population in the colonial port towns. In respect of Madras and Pondicherry, see Neild (1979), Ramaswami (1977), Love (1913), Prakash (1998), Richards (1975), and Manning (1996).



Map 7.5 Map of Pondichery Published in 1704
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima, who owns the map.

The growth of port towns during the period signified another important change. It deepened the dependence of the Indian society on European commercial powers. The ports, which functioned not only as gateways of import–export commodity exchanges but also as mines, so to speak, for those aspiring to make fortunes, gradually transformed themselves into centres for colonial development both economically and politically. With the deepening crisis in Indian politics exemplified by the collapse of the Mughal Empire, the rise of Maratha and Nizam power, the Carnatic Wars, and the Mysore Wars, the European commercial powers, through transactions and manoeuvres, made good use of intra-Indian rivalries to acquire considerable political power and authority as well.[19] Among other factors, the financial superiority of the English East India Company, acquired especially after the battle of Plassey in Bengal, made it the most powerful political power by the end of the eighteenth century, and opened up the road to the establishment of the colonial economic system in south India in the coming century.

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[19] The best contemporary description of the transactions between the Indian powers and the European powers is *The Private Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai* (Pillai 1904–28), which recorded details of transactions between the French Governor in Pondicherry and the local powers during the period between 1736 and 1761.

What was the impact of south India upon Europe in the eighteenth century? By far the most important was the export of cotton textiles by the European East India companies. It is widely known that increasing textile export to Europe forced major European countries to adopt prohibitive customs measures. There followed import-substitution policies in many of the European countries, especially England. As Beverly Lemire's recent study shows (Lemire 2006), processes were being put in place by European technology to catch up and compete with Indian calicoes. A series of technological innovations were generated by the textile industry in England, which finally resulted in the Industrial Revolution.

The impact did not end with Europe. Textile export to Southeast Asia not only by Indian traders, but also by the Dutch East India Company and the European country traders operating outside the Company trade contributed greatly to the development of intra-Asian commodity transactions stretching from East Africa in the west, to the Middle East, and as far as Japan in the east. Textile export to Africa, for instance, was utilized for the Atlantic slave trade. Indian textile was also used as a sort of currency in Southeast Asia for the exchange of spices and other commodities. The movement of bullion, brought to Asia to counter the movement of textiles and other Asian goods, also contributed greatly to the balancing of the conspicuous difference in exchange rate between silver and gold that had long existed between the West and the East, setting the groundwork for establishing the global economy.

7.3.3 Political and Economic Subordination

The establishment of the Europe–Asia market linkage was followed by British political hegemony over India. 'Free' trade was enforced under this unbalanced relationship between the two countries, paving the way for British political and economic subjugation of India. This relationship became the most critical pillar in the structure of the global economy during the nineteenth century. It is ironical that the Indian textile industry, which had led the manufacturing sector of the world till at least the mid-eighteenth century and which had contributed greatly to establishing a single global economy across regions, also gave rise to a superior–subordinate relationship between Europe and Asia.

7.4 COLONIAL FORMATION

7.4.1 *Mirāsiḍārs* and Colonial Land Systems

TSUKASA MIZUSHIMA

The main concern of the East India Company's administration in south India from the end of the eighteenth century to the early part of the nineteenth was no longer commercial transactions. Land administration came to be more important as it constituted for the colonial government the main revenue resource, to maximize which they went through a process of trial and error for a few decades, attempting various types of settlements in terms of duration, amounts, units of collection, and payers. Though the duration of the settlement and the amounts assessed were quite important in evaluating the impact of colonial revenue administration upon society, the unit, which was closely linked with the selection of payers and land ownership, had a more serious impact, as we will see.

The earliest administration generally followed the pre-existing lease system. The Jagir, which was ceded by the Nawab of Arcot after the Carnatic Wars in 1760, came to be placed under direct Company management in 1780 and was soon parcelled out as 15 revenue farms for lease. The government put them up for auction and fifteen renters were carefully selected from among 154 applicants. The farms were rented out to the lessee for a period of eight years in 1784.[20] However, many of the revenue farms went bankrupt before long and the system proved to be a total failure. In 1785, the Madras Board of Revenue was set up as a government body to manage land administration. Even after its establishment, fresh attempts still continued to be made, one after another, by the English revenue officers posted in various districts.

Among other systems tried out during the period, two important types emerged. The first was the so-called *raiyatwari* settlement. It was introduced in many of the drier inland districts like Baramahal (Salem and Coimbatore districts in the colonial period) where the village structure was simple and the villagers were mostly self-cultivating peasants or *raiyats* with some supra-village-level lords above them. The basic principle of the revenue officers in the area was to assign landholding to cultivating *raiyats* as much as possible. Supra-village-level lords were deliberately excluded from the settlement and were thus deprived of controlling powers. The *raiyats* so selected as landholders by these procedures were also made responsible for the tax for the holding.

The Village Settlement system, on the other hand, chose one among the villagers and made him responsible for the revenue of the whole village. In some cases, villagers were collectively made responsible for the entire revenue. Village Settlement was generally supported by the English administrators posted in the coastal regions like the Jagir and Arcot, where agricultural conditions were more favourable than in the drier inland districts and the village structure was generally more stratified than in the interior regions.

Despite these attempts in south India, there was an abrupt order from the Home Government, at the end of the eighteenth century, to introduce the Zamindari Settlement that followed the system adopted in Bengal in 1793. This system, whose basic unit sometimes comprised a few hundred or more villages, nominated a *zamindar* and assigned him exclusive ownership of the whole area. As the amount of revenue was permanently fixed, the system was also called Permanent Settlement. Fixing permanent revenue, the government hoped, would work as an incentive for *zamindar*s to open new fields and stabilize society. The larger revenue unit with fixed revenue, and with one proprietor responsible for payment, also meant that the government would save a lot on procedures, cost, and time.

Many of the *zamindar*s so selected in south India, however, went bankrupt before long. To put an end to the confusion, the Home Government enforced the *raiyatwari* system as final in the 1810s,[21] and the system was enforced wherever the Permanent Settlement failed. As a result, the area under Permanent Settlement remained around one-third of Madras Presidency (see Map 7.6) with the remaining two-thirds coming under the *raiyatwari* system.[22]

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[20] It seems a good number of the applicants were former revenue officers under the Nawab's government. According to the Minutes Consultations of the Revenue Department, which give information on fifteen applicants, seven were *amuldars*, one was a manager of an *amuldar*, one was a rich local, and the other four ordinary locals (Extract from Minutes Consultations dated 14th January, 1784, *Revenue Department Sundries*, vol. 2, p. 25).

[21] Thomas Munro, who had acted as revenue officer in the Baramahal under Captain Read between 1792 and 1799, was active back in London between 1807 and 1814 in supplying information to the lobbies about the merits of *raiyatwari* settlement. Munro came back to Madras in 1820 as Governor and carried out the

Whatever other impact the attempted land systems and their distinctive features could have had, the most important upon the indigenous system was the establishment of exclusive land ownership. This does not mean that pre-colonial India did not have a sort of exclusive private land ownership but that the nature of that ownership totally differed from that established by colonial rule through settlement. For instance, there occurred a good number of transfers of *mirāsi* rights in the pre-colonial period. What was transacted was, however, not the exclusive, monopolistic land ownership but the exclusive right to one of the shares embedded in the transferred land. Many other shares were attached to the transferred land and assigned to people like washermen, carpenters, barbers, and others, and these continued to be distributed even after the land was transferred. A similar example was *inam* or *maniyam* land.[23] This was basically a category of land with either reduced tax or without any tax. These lands did not seem to exclude the right of distribution of shares to others either. The land ownership established under the colonial rule, however, was quite different from the ones described here. It was exclusive in the sense that it shut off all the shares previously distributed to others. In other words, it removed all the layers of ownership except that of the landholder.

Early British colonial officers believed that a crucial key to the stability of 'Asiatic Society' was to establish private property that could withstand any interference by capricious and 'despotic Asian rulers'. As some studies have already shown, this way of thinking was a reflection of conditions in contemporary British society, where aristocratic lords were struggling to defend their own interests against the power of absolute monarchy by proclaiming their estates as 'private property'.[24] Colonial officers coming from England similarly found the establishment of private land ownership indispensable to stabilize society, and tried to shape the idea through the colonial land systems. Though the units differed greatly, both the *raiyatwari* and *zamindari* settlements fell within the same category in the sense that both selected a single layer of ownership by excluding others.

Establishing an exclusive single layer of private land ownership was also pragmatic from the point of view of levying revenue, as it could fix the responsibility of paying tax on a single individual as the taxpayer. The government, while declaring nominal land ownership by the state, assigned the actual landholding right to cultivators on the condition that the latter were obliged to pay tax for the holding.

However, in practice, the *raiyatwari* settlement or system, faced many problems. Not much is known about the procedures used to enforce the settlement in the early nineteenth century, but the procedures launched in the latter half of the nineteenth century took more or less the following steps. Village land was first surveyed and demarcated into hundreds or thousands of lots taking

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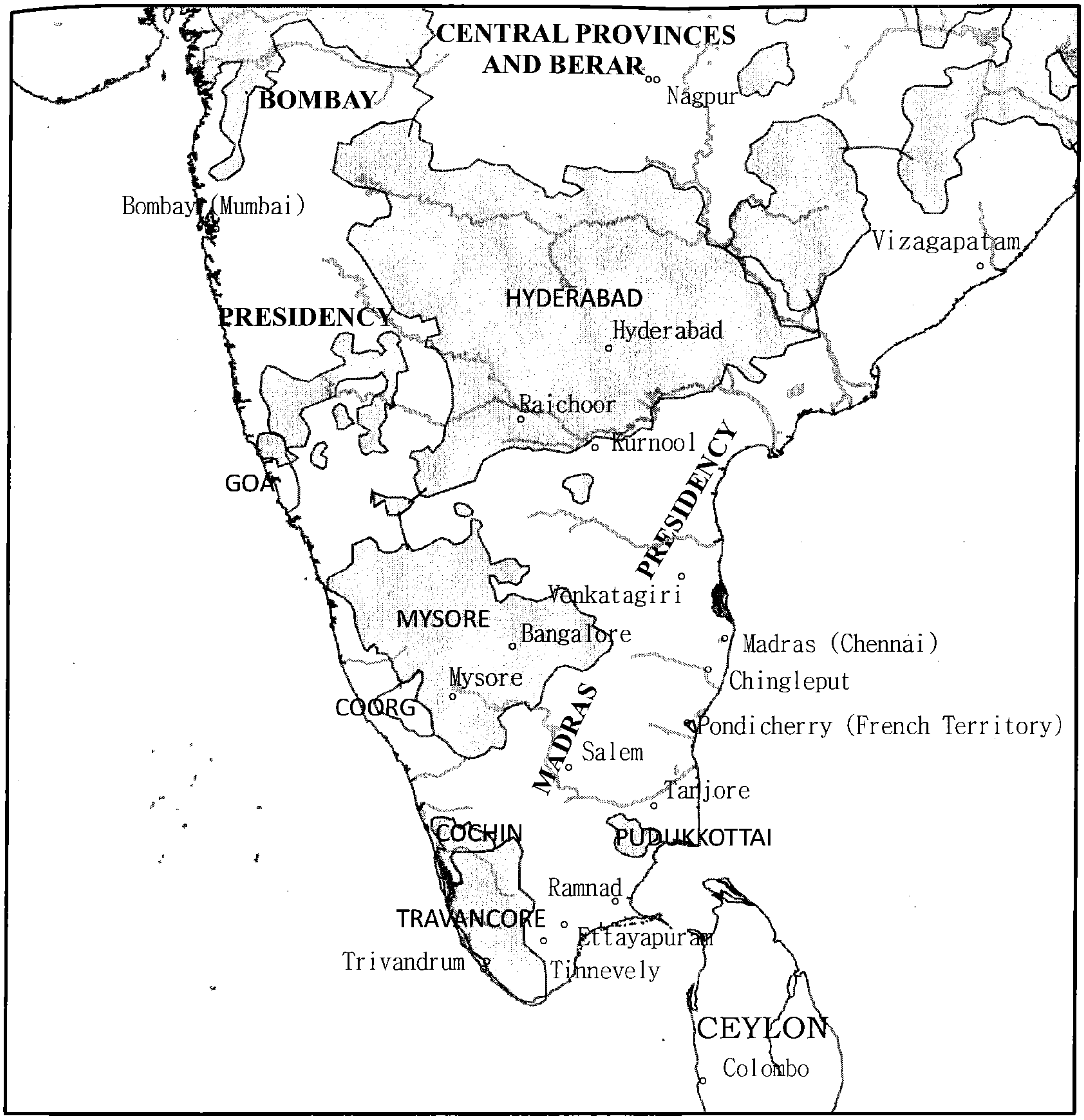
settlement. For Munro's role in enforcing the *raiyatwari* settlement, see Stein 1979; Mukherjee 1962.

[22] For the Zamindari Settlement and the situation during the colonial rule, see Baker 1976.

[23] *Inam* or *maniyam* was land that was either part of a village or a whole village that was granted by the state or by the local communities to some functionaries for their services. Temples, priests, service castes, and others were among the list of *imam* or *maniyam* recipients.

[24] The work of Hiroyuki Kotani is perhaps the most important in this aspect. See Kotani 2002.


CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR
BOMBAY
Nagpur
Bombay (Mumbai)
Vizagapatam
HYDERABAD
PRESIDENCY
Hyderabad
Raichoor
Kurnool
PRESIDENCY
GOA
Venkatagiri
MYSORE
Bangalore
Madras (Chennai)
Mysore
Chingleput
MADRAS
COORG
Pondicherry (French Territory)
Salem
Tanjore
COCHIN
PUDUKKOTTAI
Ramnad
TRAVANCORE
Ettayapuram
Trivandrum
Tinnevely
CEYLON
Colombo

Map 7.6 South India around 1870: The British Territory and the Princely States
Source: Courtesy of Y. Subbarayalu.

into consideration irrigation factors and grades of soil (see Figure 7.8). After considering the distance from market towns, and so on, an assessment of each lot was made. Then a *raiyat* or cultivator who would be responsible for the tax of the lot was recorded in the land register. As the land lots held by each *raiyat* were scattered over different parts of the village, every landholder was issued a land title called *paṭṭā* in which the landholder's name, the lot numbers, their extents and assessments, and their totals were recorded. The *raiyat* so recorded and issued a *paṭṭā* was called a *paṭṭādār* and became the landholder. He was bound to pay tax on the land he held and continued to be a landholder as long as he paid it. Once he neglected his 'duty' of paying tax, the land was taken away and was assigned to any other person who offered to pay the tax on the lot. Another important aspect was that any lot that was yet to be assigned in the village was understood to be the property of the state, and the state believed that it could freely allocate the unoccupied land to anyone who offered to take it and pay tax on it.

The indigenous system prevalent in the pre-colonial period had been, however, quite different from the *raiyatwari* system that the colonial government tried to introduce. As described above, villagers were entitled not to particular lots of land, but to particular shares in the whole produce of the entire land in the locality. Besides, there were a class of people who claimed ownership of the entire property of the locality,

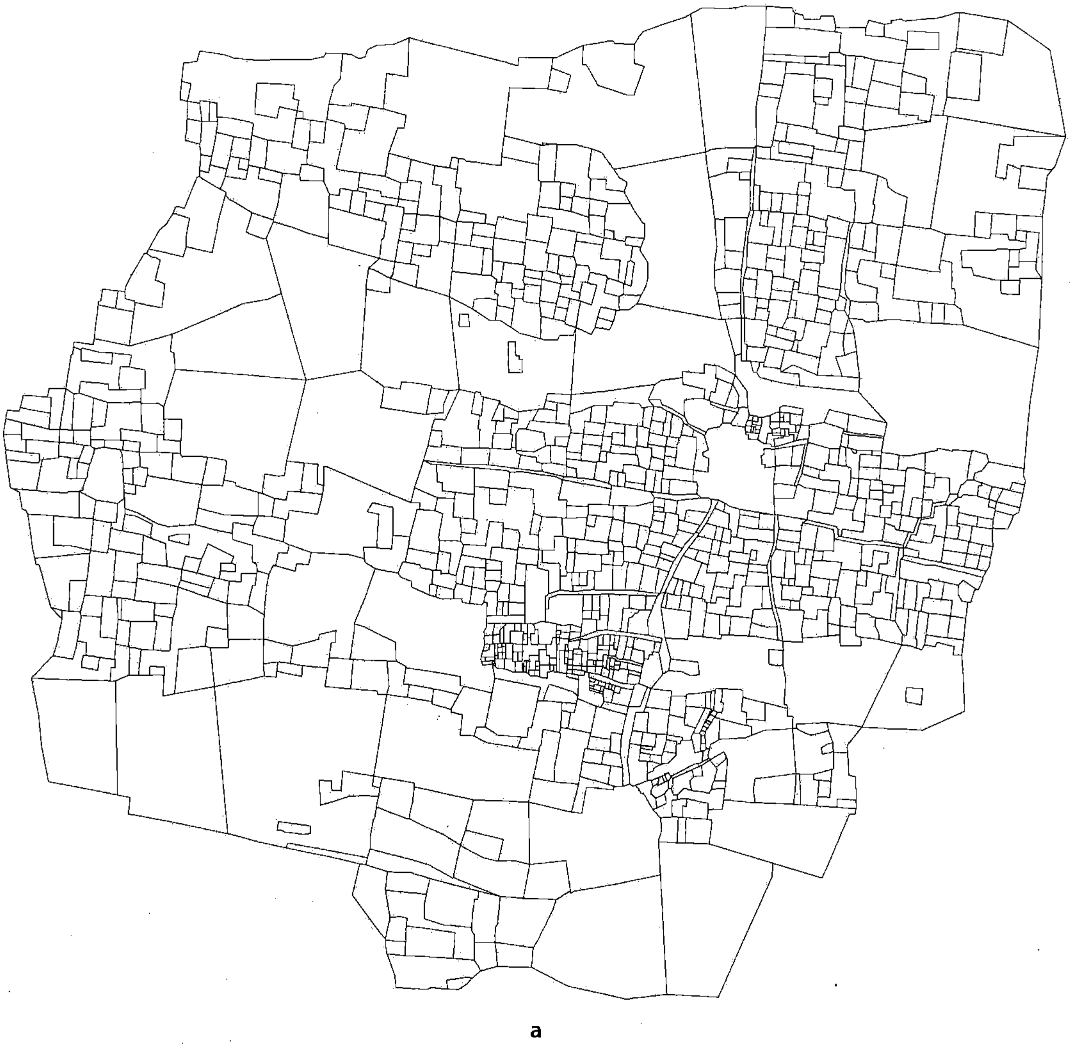
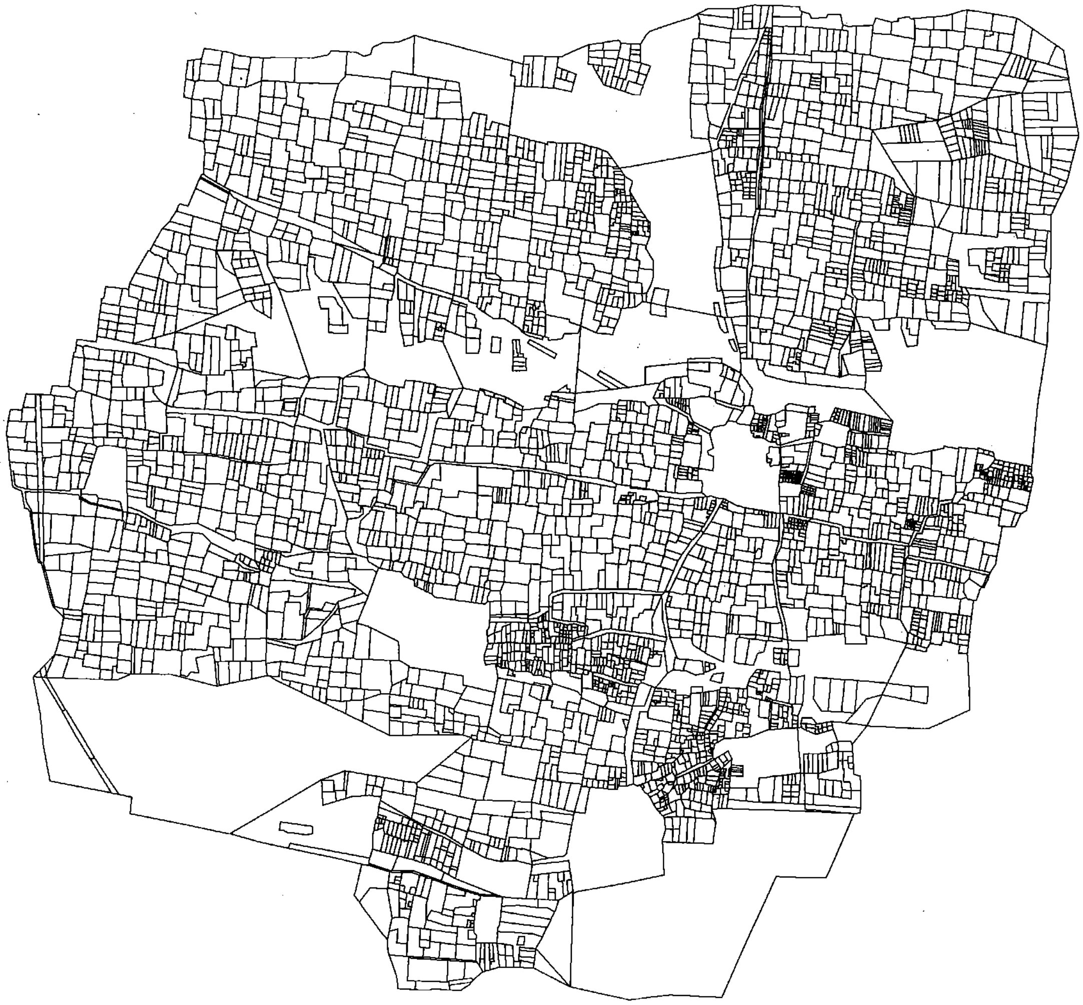


Figure 7.8 Division of Village into Land Lots in a Village in South India: (a) 1892 and (b) 1982
Sources: Prepared from the field books of a village accountant.



b

Figure 7.8 (*Cont'd*)

including unoccupied land. In south India this class of people, whom we may characterize as village lords, were called *mirāsidār* and there were many of them.[25] Lionel Place, who was

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[25] The right to a share in the whole produce in the locality was thought to be inheritable, saleable, and mortgageable. This type of right was called *kani* in Tamil and its holder was generally called *kaniyatchikaran*. British revenue officers posted in south India noticed it and chose the Persian word 'mirāsi', meaning inheritance or property, as its nomenclature. Any holder of a *mirāsi* right, including village servants and officers, could be called a 'mirāsidār'. British colonial officers, however, used the term *mirāsidār* solely to signify the village landlord. See *Place's Final Report on the Jagir*, dated 6 June 1799, paragraph 90 (*Papers on Mirasi Rights*, Madras, Pharoah and Co. Atheneum Press, Mount Road, 1862, p. 52).

No.	Names of Mirasidars	Shares
1	Nainiappa Reddi	½
2	C. Kesava Reddi	½
3	Andiyappa Reddi	½
4	Naravana Reddi	½
5	Venkatesn Reddi	½
6	Kaudappa Reddi	½
7	Andiyappa Reddi	⅞
8	Venkatachela Reddi	¼
9	Virasami Reddi and Andiyappa Reddi	1
10	Chellappa Reddi	1
11	Kuppunchetti and Ragavachetti	½
12	Chinna Tambi Naikau	½
13	Tana Pillai	¼
14	C. Ettirajulu Chetti, Trustee of Sri Adikesava Perumal Kovil	½
15	Kauakammal	⅛
	Total	8

Figure 7.9 *Mirāsidārs* and Their Shares Recorded in Settlement Register of Ponneri Taluq in 1877
Sources: Courtesy of Tsukasa Mizushima.

the first Collector of the Jagir, recorded a total of 9,499 *mirāsidār* personal names in around 2,300 villages in the Jagir.[26] There were also other districts where the presence of *mirāsidārs* was reported.[27] Generally speaking, the *mirāsidārs* claimed ownership of the whole village in shares among themselves and actually controlled the activities of local producers. Whenever the government attempted to introduce non-*mirāsidār* cultivators or *payakāris* on unoccupied land or land abandoned by the *mirāsidārs*, the latter strongly opposed it and took every possible measure to prevent the *payakāris* from acquiring ownership.[28]

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[26] 'Abstract State of the Number of Meerassee Shares and of Meerassee Holders in the Several Districts of the Jagheer in Fusly 1207 shewing also the Quantity of Meerassee unclaimed & occupied by Pyacarries' (*Board's Collections*, F/4/112, Nos 2115–16, Miscellaneous Accounts, Statistical Tables etc. accompanying Lionel Place's Report on the Company's Jaghire, vols 1–2, Madras Revenue, 2 March 1803, draft 73/1802-03, E/4/890).

[27] Tables, etc., India contained in *Papers on Mirasi Rights*.

After the introduction of the *raiyatwari* system, the first half of the nineteenth century saw the colonial government vacillating between pro-*mirāsidār* and pro-*payakāri* policies. However, as the development of cultivation by granting new land to the *payakāris* meant increasing land revenue for the government, the latter gradually took the side of the *payakāris*. *Mirāsidārs* slowly lost ground and finally found themselves in a position where they received at the most nominal landlord rent from the non-*mirāsidār* landholders in the latter half of the nineteenth century (see Figure 7.9).[29]

The south Indian village was thus transformed into a very simple structure in which a *raiyat* and the state faced each other on the respective land lots virtually without any intermediaries between them. Societal units, formerly based upon the locality in which the *mirāsi* system had functioned, were now disassembled into a number of land lots, and a village became simply an assemblage of these land lots separated from each other. Such a colonial land system produced the base of the social formation in the colonial period lasting nearly one and a half centuries.

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[28] One of the earliest studies on *mirāsidāri* was by Sivakumar (1978).

[29] For the relation between the *mirasidars* and the other *raiyats* in the revenue administration, see Mizushima (2002).

7.4.2 Colonial Administration and Education Policy

MIWAKO SHIGA

7.4.2.1 *The Establishment of the Administrative System: A New Employment Opportunity*

The East India Company colonized the country initially with a view to purchasing Asian commodities by participating in the Indian Ocean trade. In order to streamline its trade, it contested other European companies and got involved in the conflicts among native rulers. The Company gradually acquired territorial control through military action against, as well as negotiation with, all of these rivals. As such, the British had no clear 'vision' of how they would govern India. Therefore, they repeatedly altered their administrative system on an ad hoc basis.

This inconsistency can be typically seen in policies with regard to legislative powers. To take just one case, Madras Presidency (see Map 7.6) was at first directly connected to the Company's Board of Directors in London, just as the presidencies of Bombay and Bengal were. However, with Pitt's India Act of 1784, Madras became a province and was placed under the Governor-General in Calcutta. This Act established an executive council with legislative powers to assist the Governor of Madras. These powers were later withdrawn with the Government of India Act of 1833, but were installed yet again in the provincial executive council, as per the Indian Councils Act of 1861.

By 1885, Madras Province comprised twenty-two districts with collectors acting as the chief agents of the government. Each district was further subdivided into *taluks*, and each *taluk* was headed by a *tahsildar*, who was almost always drawn from the native population. In the course of establishing the executive system, natives were employed to fill all positions except high posts such as governor and collectors (Maclean 1987/1885: vol. 1, 62–6).

7.4.2.2 *Law and Judicial Institutions*

The development of a multi-level appeals system in the British territory was likewise slow and halting. The Madras Supreme Court, established in 1801 by an Act of Parliament, exercised jurisdiction over all the British in the Presidency, as well as those natives who resided in the Presidency Town of Madras. The remaining native population came under the jurisdiction of the Sadr Diwani Adalat (civil court) and the Sadr Faujdari Adalat (criminal court), both of which were instituted by the East India Company. This dual system was abolished when the rule of the East India Company was transferred to the Crown. The Indian High Courts Act of 1861 and the Parliament Act of 1862 merged the Supreme Court and the Sadr courts into the new Madras High Court.

Under the High Court were the courts of the district judges, subordinate judges, and munsif judges, all of which tried civil cases. Magisterial courts heard criminal cases. The Sessions Courts were presided over by the district magistrates, who were also district collectors. Each *taluk* in turn came under the magisterial control of a *tahsildar* (Maclean 1987/1885: vol. 1, 198–200).

Rather than instituting a uniform civil code, the British differentiated the civil laws by religious community. The Regulation of 1772 declared that the *Qur'an* for Muslims and the *Shastras* for Hindus be adhered to in all lawsuits regarding inheritance, marriage, caste, and other matters relating to religious practices and institutions.[30]

The impact of this regulation on Indian society was crucial. *Shastras* such as the *Manusmriti*, which promoted the hierarchy of the *varnas* as the ideal social order, were applied to all Hindus, irrespective of the regional and caste diversity in customary laws and practices, resulting in the spread of Brahminical values.

7.4.2.3 *Disputes over Education Policy*

The institutionalization and expansion of colonial administration created the necessity for the cultivation of a group of Indians who could serve in junior administrative posts. The education system for Indians, however, did not develop smoothly, in part because there was no coordinated policy as to who and what should be taught. We find two points of contention in the educational policy of the British: one, the subjects to be taught, that is, whether the focus should be on Indian 'tradition' and vernaculars or on 'modern' science and English; two, the question of who should be educated, whether the emphasis should be on primary education for the masses or on higher education for elites.

In south India, missionaries had already begun playing a leading role in primary education among the native population. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, an overseas branch of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), was one of the pioneering educational bodies. Though their purpose was mainly to spread Christianity, as the name suggests, their attempt to translate the Bible into native languages promoted the study of the vernaculars and the publication of textbooks (Maclean 1987/1885: vol. 1, 563–7).

It is worthwhile to note that the native rulers, for some time, supported their activities. For example, the Rajahs of Ramnad, Tanjore, and Shivaganga promised funding to establish normal schools to train native teachers in order to spread education in rural areas (Frykenberg 1986: 41; Maclean 1987/1885: vol. 1, 567).

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[30] For criminal law, in contrast, they introduced uniform codes: the Indian Penal Code of 1861 and the Criminal Procedure Code of 1882.

Thomas Munro, the Governor of Madras (1820–7), gave priority to mass education through the medium of vernaculars. As a preliminary measure, he established a normal school for the training of native teachers at Madras. Students of this central normal school were expected to teach at local schools, which were to be established at each district (collectorate school) and *taluk* (*tahsildari* school). Though English was taught in the collectorate schools at Madras, the medium of education was vernacular in other local schools. Munro further encouraged the publication of vernacular textbooks (Maclean 1987/1885: vol. 1, 569).

Munro's education policy was disrupted by Thomas Babington Macaulay's 1835 'Minute on Education' declaring that the colonial education system must mould elites that were 'Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, opinions, morals, and intellect'.[31] Macaulay, a law member of the Governor-General's Council, aimed to train primarily those natives who were expected to support the enlarged colonial administration. Mountstuart Elphinstone, the Governor of Madras (1837–42), adhered to this policy and attached more importance to higher education for elites than to elementary education for the masses.[32] He presented a scheme that would establish one central collegiate institution (university) at Madras city and connect provincial colleges with the central institution. In 1857, Madras University was instituted by incorporating existing colleges such as the Madras Medical College and Madras Presidency College (Maclean 1987/1885: vol. 1, 563–71) (see Figure 7.10).

However, there remained some doubt as to the soundness of the strategy of giving priority to the cultivation of elite deferring or neglecting mass education. The dispatch of 1854, already reconsidering Macaulay's stance, declared that it was desirable to convey useful and practical knowledge to the masses also. The modified policy was however, not brought into practice partly because of lack of funding (Radhakrishnan 1990: 509). From the 1870s, primary and intermediate levels of education witnessed some progress by drawing on local and municipal funds for elementary education. But, as Table 7.2 shows, there was no change in the situation where non-governmental institutions, unaided or aided by the government of Madras, were in charge of education (Maclean 1987/1885: vol. 1, 571–4).

However, it was not the masses that benefited from this expansion of primary education. Since educational qualifications could not necessarily guarantee employment in underdeveloped non-agricultural industries, the beneficiaries of primary education were those who could cherish the hope of completing higher-level education in order to acquire a position as a government official or a professional.

Brahmins consistently maintained their dominant position in government service right from the establishment of British rule in the south, in spite of their numerical inferiority, as Table 7.3 clearly indicates.

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[31] Minute by the Hon'ble T. B. Macaulay, dated the 2nd February 1835. http://www.mssu.edu/project southasia/history/primarydocs/education/Macaulay001.

[32] One influential opinion put it this way: '[Efforts] to elevate the moral and intellectual condition of any people ... concern the education of the higher classes, of persons possessing leisure and natural influence over the minds of their countrymen. By raising the standard of instruction among these classes, you would eventually produce a much greater and more beneficial change in the ideas and feelings of the community than you can hope to produce by acting directly on the more numerous class' (quoted in Frykenberg 1986: 49).

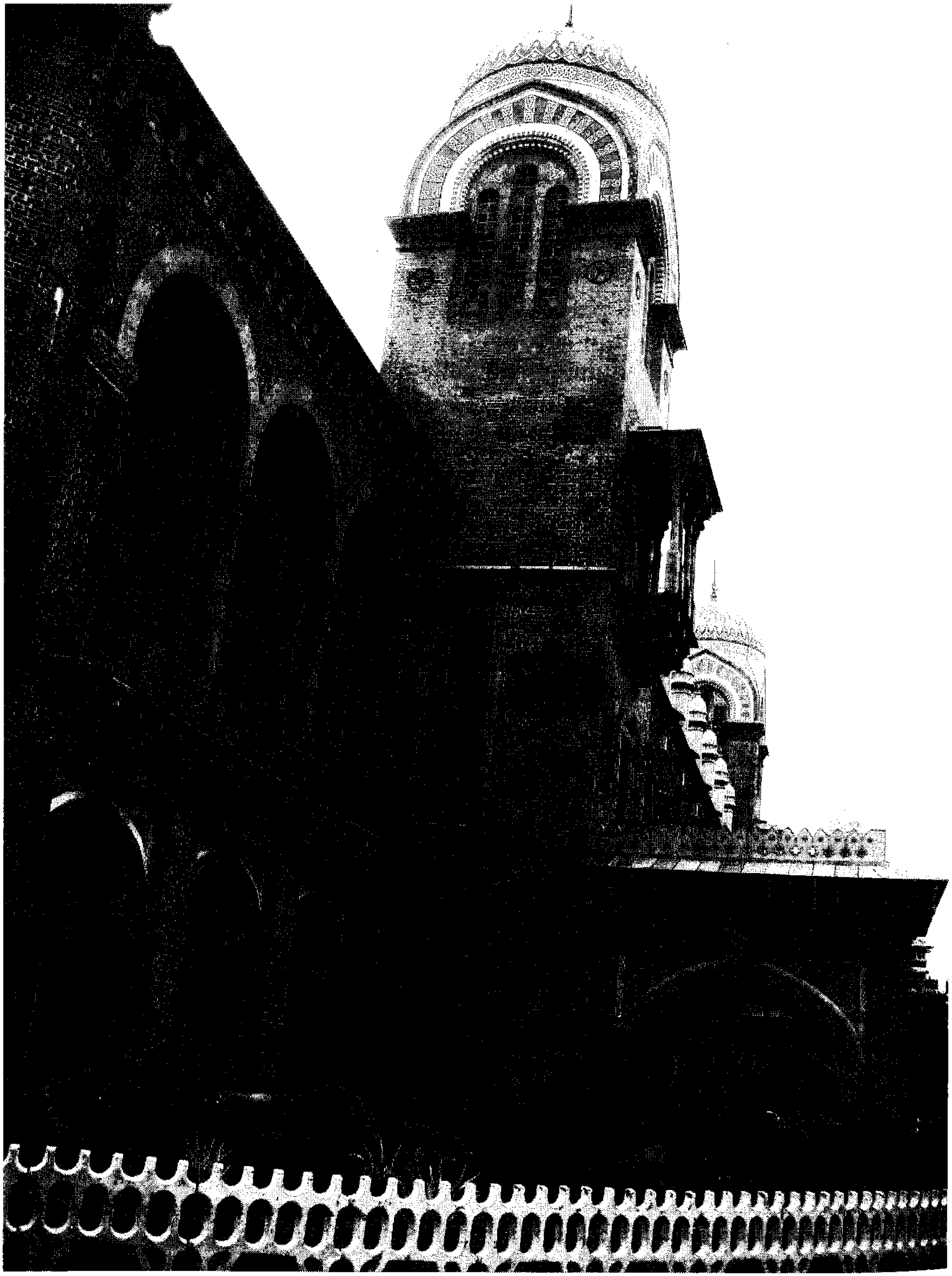

Figure 7.10 Centenary Hall of Madras University Established in 1856
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

Table 7.2 Number of Educational Institutions (1884–5)

	Description of Institution	Government and Quasi-Govt	Non-Govt Aided and Unaided
Boys	Arts Colleges	10	20
	High Schools	26	94
	Middle Schools	132	343
	Primary Schools	1150	12989
	Normal Schools for Masters	41	15*
Girls	Colleges	0	0
	High Schools	0	26
	Middle Schools	21	118
	Primary Schools	61	519
	Normal Schools for Mistresses	4	-*
Total No.		1445	14124

Source: Maclean 1987/1885, vol. 1: 576–7.

Note: * The source does not specify clearly whether these 15 normal schools were for boys or girls.

Table 7.3 Distribution of Select Government Posts

	Number	Percentage of Appointments Held		Percentage of Total Male Population
		1896	1912	
Deputy Collectors				
Brahmins	77	53.0	55.0	3.2
Non-Brahmin Hindus	30	25.0	21.5	85.6
Muslims	15	6.5	10.5	6.6
Indian Christians	7	4.0	5.0	2.7
Europeans and Eurasians	11	11.5	8.0	0.1
Sub-Judges				
Brahmins	15	71.4	83.3	same
Non-Brahmin Hindus	3	21.4	16.7	as above
Muslims	nil	nil	nil	
Indian Christians	nil	nil	nil	
Europeans and Eurasians	nil	7.2	nil	
District Munsifs				
Brahmins	93	66.4	72.6	same
Non-Brahmin Hindus	25	21.2	19.5	as above
Muslims	2	0.9	1.6	
Indian Christians	5	11.5	3.9	
Europeans and Eurasians	3	nil	2.4	

Source: Arooran 1980: 37.

Table 7.4 Literacy Rate in the Vernaculars

	1901	1911	1921
Tamil Brahmins	73.6	71.9	71.5
Telugu Brahmins	67.3	68.2	59.7
Nayars	39.5	41.9	42.9
Chettiars	32.0	39.1	39.5
Christians	16.2	20.4	21.9
Nadars	15.4	18.1	20.0
Balija Naidus	14.3	20.9	22.3
Vellalas	6.9	24.6	24.2
Kammas	4.8	12.2	13.6
Reddis	3.8	9.0	10.2
Velamas	2.5	3.6	7.0

Source: *Census of India*, vol. 13, Madras, 1901, 1911, 1921.

Table 7.5 Literacy Rate in English

	1901	1911	1921
Tamil Brahmins	17.88	22.27	28.21
Telugu Brahmins	10.84	14.75	17.37
Christians	2.72	4.41	5.47
Nayars	1.54	2.97	4.57
Balija Naidus	0.98	2.60	3.43
Vellalas	0.19	2.12	2.37
Chettis	0.15	0.98	2.34
Velamas	0.06	0.41	0.63
Nadars	0.05	0.30	0.75
Reddis	0.04	0.20	0.40
Kammas	0.03	0.20	0.45

Source: *Census of India*, vol. 13, Madras, 1901, 1911, 1921.

Table 7.6 Percentage of Degree Recipients

Year	Brahmins	Christians	Other Hindus	Muslims
1864	59.9	7.4	23.7	1.5
1880	63.8	12.2	16.0	0.2
Population (%)	3.6	2.2	87.9	6.2

Source: Radhakrishnan 1990: 509.

The dominance of Brahmins in government service was mainly due to their high rate of literacy both in the vernaculars and in English (Arooran 1980: 37–8)—Tables 7.4 and 7.5 indicate a higher literacy rate among Brahmins than among other castes. Table 7.6 shows the preponderance in university-level education of Brahmins, who were the first, and almost the only, community in nineteenth-century south India to adjust themselves to the socio-political changes brought about by colonial rule. They acquired Western-style education, realizing that such qualifications were indispensable for gaining power in the new system.

This imbalance, however, awakened a sense of animosity and rivalry among the non-Brahmin communities. This issue will be discussed in section 7.5.4.

7.5 RESPONSES TO COLONIAL FORMATION

7.5.1 Landholders in the Nineteenth Century

TSUKASA MIZUSHIMA

An important feature accompanying the introduction of the colonial land system was the denial of customary rights to those who were not acknowledged as landholders or *paṭṭādārs* during the process of the *raiyatwari* settlement. Village functionaries and others whose livelihoods were supported by shares in the total local produce but were not registered as *paṭṭādārs* lost their means of support and were also rendered landless. Though some of them could still survive with grants of *inam* land or through service contracts with other households, their position differed drastically from that in the *mirāsi* system in which they received shares in the entire produce of the locality.[33]

Those who thus lost their customary rights in the new circumstances now had to make their living either through the acquisition of land lots or by working as landless labourers. In the textiles sector, too, the loss of the market in Europe, and the overwhelming competition from English mill-made yarn in the domestic market, greatly reduced earning opportunities. Such processes have been characterized as peasantization or de-industrialization by some historians (Bayly 1988 and 1995; Washbrook 2006). Furthermore, these people had to face greater difficulties in the first half of the nineteenth century when the economic depression with the lowering of commodity prices made their burden of paying cash revenue much heavier.

South Indian society, however, reacted rather positively to such difficult circumstances. For instance, the population increase in south India between 1800 and 1880 was, according to Guha's estimate, 113 per cent, in contrast with north India where the growth rate in the same period was estimated at only 26 per cent (Guha 2001, p. 58). A comparison of the population figures of the Jagir recorded in the *Place Report* at the end of the eighteenth century and the *Permanent Settlement Record* at the beginning of the nineteenth with the figures in the *1871 Census* indicates a net increase of between 246 and 283 per cent during the period.[34] According to an estimate by Dharma Kumar, the net increase during the same period was 230 per cent (see Map 7.7).

Population growth in south India went hand in hand with an increase in cultivation. Not only uncultivated tracts within the boundaries of habited villages but also virgin areas on the periphery began to be reclaimed at the beginning of the nineteenth century. An investigation of village statistics recorded in the *Permanent Settlement Records* in 1801 indicates that the percentage of cultivated extent in the total area[35] was as low as 32 on an average, though the cultivated percentages differed from hamlet to hamlet.[36] The reclamation process went on till the end of the nineteenth century, when land fit for agricultural operations almost exhausted.

This process of land reclamation must have been closely related to the peasantization or de-industrialization processes mentioned above. In other words, those excluded from landholding in the *raiyatwari* system in areas long under cultivation must have sought to acquire lands in new areas beyond the control of *mirāsidārs* or in virgin lands where the

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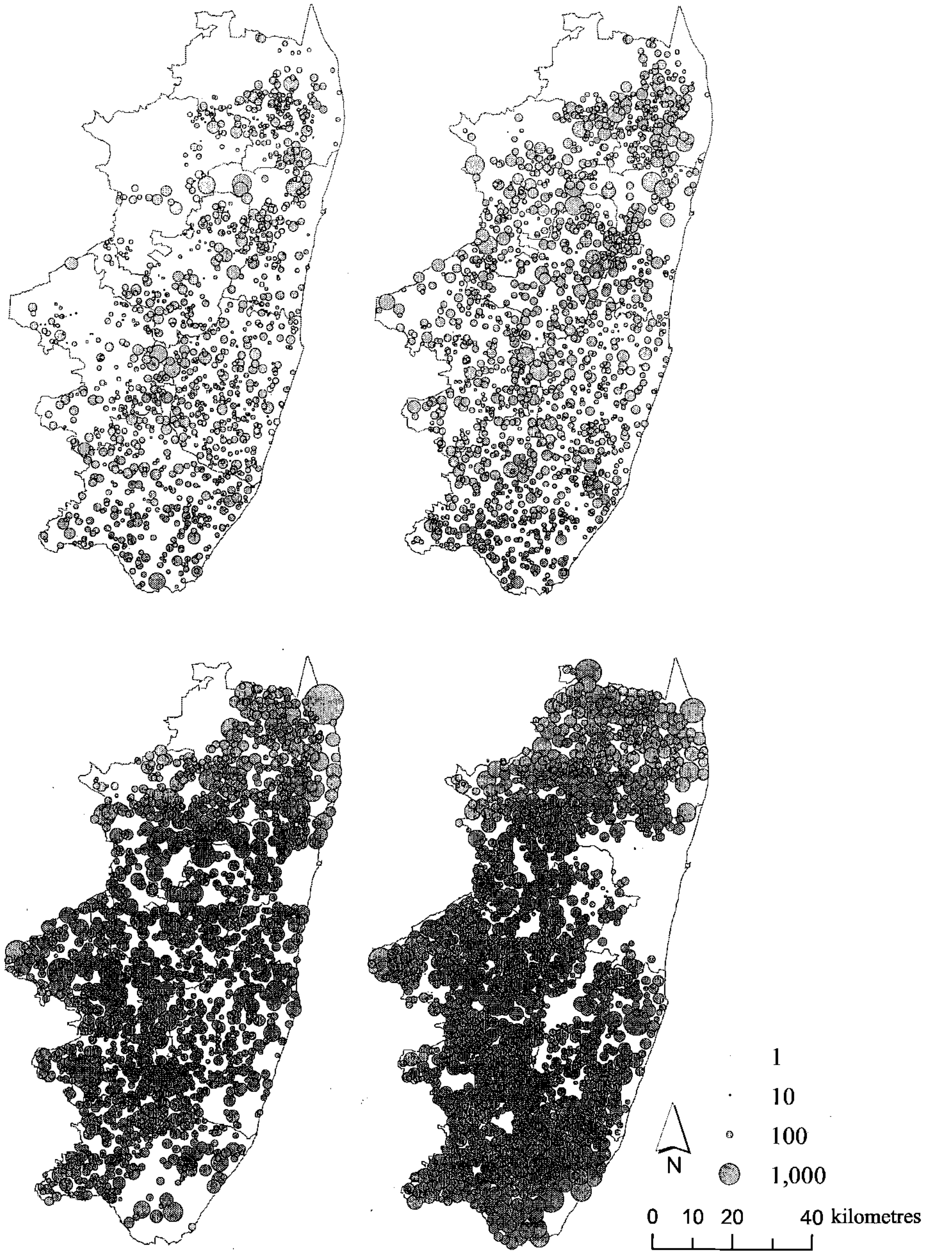
[33] This system known as *jajmani* was formulated after the share distribution system collapsed due to colonial intervention. The *jajmani* system was basically the contract relation between the service castes and others. As mentioned already, *jajmani* system was totally different from the *mirāsi* system described above.

[34] The total population calculated from the *Place Report* (*Place's Final Report on the Jagir*, Fort St. George, 1st July 1799: Paragraphs 324–39 in the *Board's Miscellaneous Records*, vol. 45, Tamil Nadu Archives) and the same from the *Permanent Settlement Records* (*Zamindari Statement, Statement relating to Permanent Settlement of Jagir forwarded as Enclosures to Mr. Greenway's Letter, 29th March, 1801*) was 271,372 and 244,845 respectively. The total from the *1871 Census* was 938,184.

[35] The cultivated extent here includes cultivated *circar* or state land as well as *maniam* or tax-exempted land in the *Zamindari Statement* [*Permanent Settlement Records*, vols 20–2, in the Board's Revenue Miscellaneous Records, Tamil Nadu State Archives]. The other land categories used in the statement include waste, house, *tope*, tank, well, *yari* or reservoir, wood, and rock.

[36] *Zamindari Statement.*



Map 7.7 Development of Cultivation in Chingleput (Hectare)

Source: Prepared by Takahashi and Tsukasa Mizushima from the following sources:
1770s: Barnard's Survey Accounts (various volumes)
1801: *Zamindari Statement, 1801,* Zamindari Statement relating to Permanent Settlement of the Jagir forwarded as Enclosures to Mr. Greenway's Letter, 29th March, 1801, vols 20–2.
1871: Census Statement of population of 1871 in each village of the Chingleput district, arranged according to area, caste, and occupation, *Imperial Census of India, 1871,* Scottish Press, 1874.
2001: Village Directory, *Census of India, 2001.*

revenue burden was comparatively lower than in the old areas.[37] The agricultural development observed during the period in south India was thus the result of the labour put in by the villagers and their efforts towards betterment of their lives.

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[37] An investigation of the spatial distribution of assessment rates in Ponneri villages, for instance, clearly shows that the lower rate areas were found on the periphery of Ponneri Taluk.

7.5.2 The South Indian Cotton Industry

HARUKA YANAGISAWA

The Indian cotton textile industry was dealt a blow by English cotton goods in the nineteenth century. According to Michael J. Twomey, while there was a sharp decline after 1870 in Indian hand-spinning, hand-weaving during the period 1800–50, on the other hand, showed only a gradual decline. This was because domestic demand for cotton cloth increased as a result of population growth which, in turn, offset decelerating exports and mitigated the impact of cotton goods imports. However, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, until 1880, hand-weaving too languished (Twomey 1983). Thereafter, handloom cloth production was stable until World War I, and then rose steadily in the interwar period (Roy 2002).

South India, where the cotton industry was highly developed, saw the number of looms increase over the nineteenth century. According to Conrad Specker, the number in Madras Presidency rose between 1820 and 1870, though there were some regional variations (Specker 1989). Competition with England, however, exerted a great influence. According to E. B. Havell, who surveyed industrial activities in south-eastern India in the early 1880s, in the Tamil country weaving had 'suffered very considerably from the competition daily growing stronger and stronger of the cheap cotton and woollen goods which are being poured into the country' (Parthasarathi 2009: 432).[38] The English manufacturers produced cotton goods of medium and high yarn counts chiefly utilizing long-staple American cotton or Egyptian cotton. Their chief competitors in India were producers of plain fabrics that the urban middle and upper classes wore on a daily basis whereas the market in coarse cloth for daily use in rural areas and in high quality clothing, such as women's wedding garments, survived. Weavers of fabrics of medium yarn count who had suffered the severest blows began to produce coarse cloth. As a result, there was an oversupply in the market and the impoverishment of weavers continued apace.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, weavers who had responded to competition from English manufactures by converting their trade to low yarn count products found themselves confronted with competition from the developing domestic production of machine-woven textiles. Indian mills, using low to medium count cotton yarn spun from Indian short-staple raw cotton, mainly produced coarse varieties of cloth that competed directly with the handloom products ubiquitously available in the rural sector for daily use. The response of weavers varied with locality, but in general took one of two forms. The first was to turn their priority to producing items that could compete with factory-made goods, such as even finer cotton cloth, non-cotton items like silk or artificial silk commodities, cloth with elaborate bordering or gold thread (*zari*), or high-quality, high-priced articles. The second, taken by some weavers who were determined to survive, was to specialize in producing coarse cloth of even thicker thread than that produced in factories. These responses resulted in an increase in the number of looms in the Madras Presidency in the first half of the twentieth century. So, we can perhaps say that the hand-weaving industry in south India experienced a new expansion at this time (Yanagisawa 1993; Baker 1984: 396).

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[38] A college professor in Kumbakonam also observed at the end of the nineteenth century, 'As regards clothing, there is no doubt that Manchester goods are steadily driving out of the market the home-woven cloths, and this is because of the great cheapness of the former' (S. Srinivasa Raghavaiyangar, *Memorandum on the Progress of the Madras Presidency during the Last Forty Years of British Administration*, Madras, printed by Government Press, 1893, p. ccix).

Behind the switch to high-quality and specialized products at a considerable number of centres of handloom production lay changes in clothing customs stimulating a growth in demand for such products. For example, women began wearing woven cotton blouses under their saris and the customs of Brahmins spread to the non-Brahmin moneyed classes, resulting in a demand for high-quality handmade goods such as silk fabrics. In the course of the first half of the twentieth century, restrictions on the type of clothing worn by the Dalit castes broke down. Formerly it had been understood that the clothing worn by Dalits, even women, should be above the knee, and that the chest be bared when working. However, by the 1950s, it was not possible for the higher castes to prohibit Dalit women from covering their breasts. Even among the lower classes, there was a growing tendency to purchase clothes for special ceremonies, such as weddings. They did not buy for ceremonial use high-priced silk saris but cheap handwoven ones, made of artificial silk or mercerized yarn. Hence, the connection between caste and dress changed. This led to a weakening of dress restrictions for the lower castes, which in turn stimulated a growth in demand for handwoven goods (Yanagisawa 1993) (see Figure 7.11).

Technical changes in the handloom industry also contributed to its survival. The most important change in this area was the replacement of the throw shuttle by the fly shuttle. In the Madras area, the government supported its wide use, and it was particularly deployed in the production of 'Madras handkerchiefs'. The fly shuttle allowed work to be done twice as quickly as before, and one person could now accomplish what had previously taken two people to do. Preparation of the warp, which had until then required a great deal of intensive labour, gradually moved to small-scale specialized factories.

An important factor favouring technological changes was, according to Roy, the 'commercialization' of handloom weaving which created a space for capitalists to operate. In the first half of the nineteenth century, centres of the textile industry where producers gathered were already largely focusing on distant markets, while from the second half of the century, weavers who had hitherto produced cloth for local consumption in villages were gradually drawn into the net of commercialization. Cotton yarn was being manufactured in India in large mills, rather than being spun locally by hand, and it was this yarn, bought from

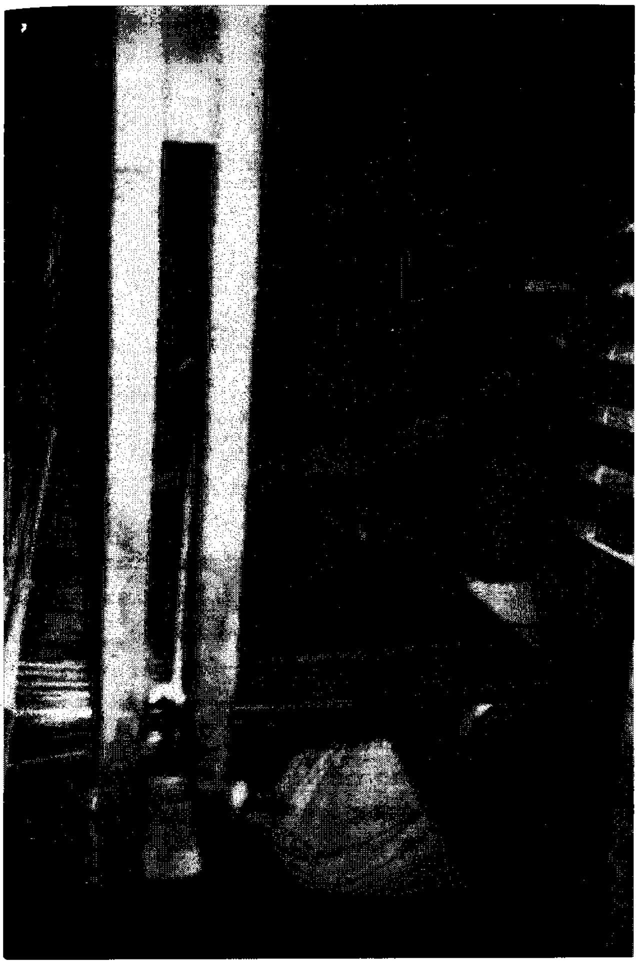


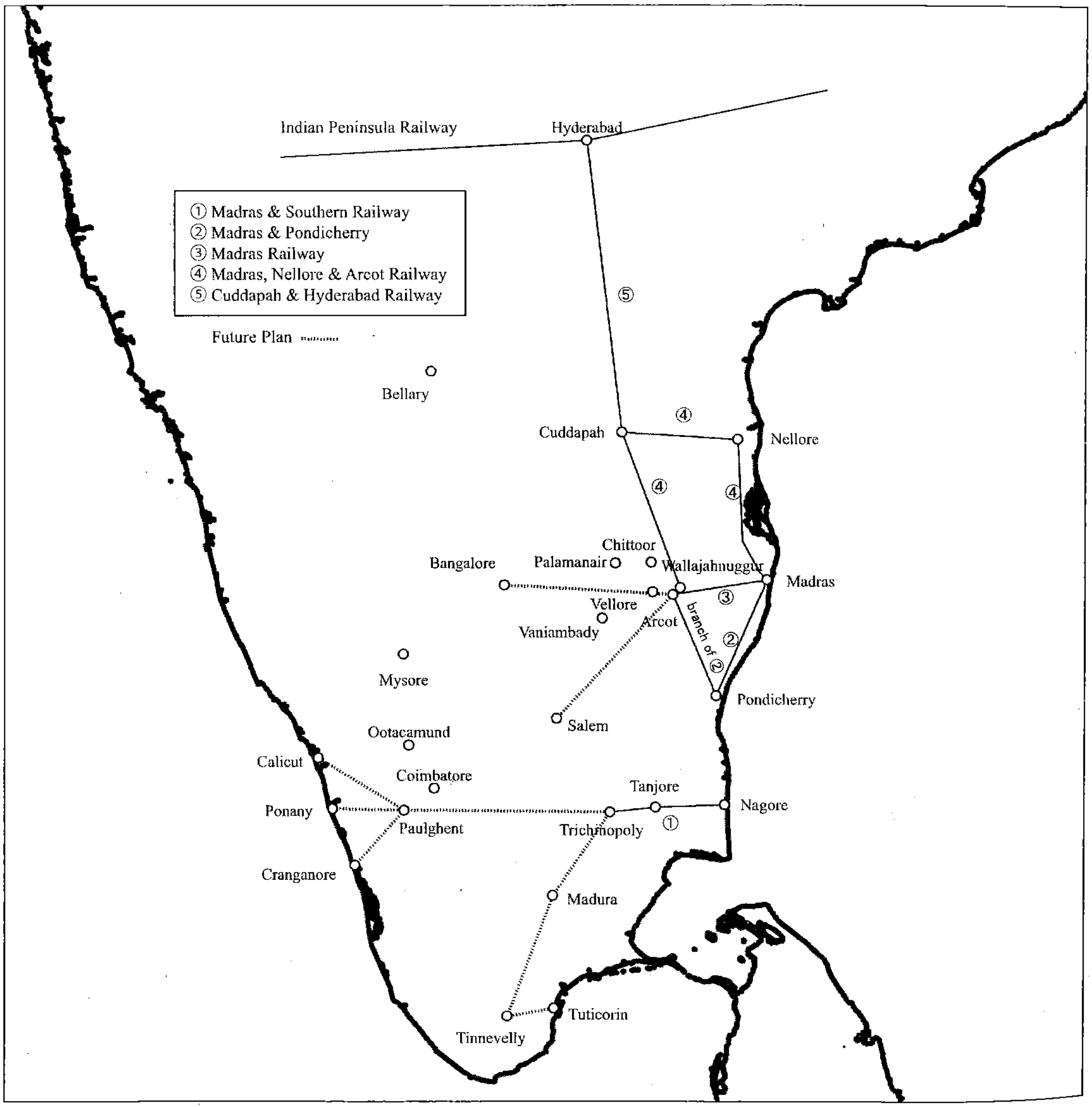
Figure 7.11 Handloom Weaver in Kanchipuram
Source: Courtesy of Haruka Yanagisawa.

merchants, that the handloom weavers used. There was also a transition from the handloom cloth being used for a variety of everyday items aimed at the local market to its being used for specialized items to be sold in distant markets. As a result, many weavers came to depend on merchants, both to provide the raw materials needed and to sell the finished products. Often, merchants leased out looms to weavers, provided the raw materials, took the product, paid wages to the weavers, and thus established a putting-out system in the industry. Though the situation varied from place to place, a wealthy class from within the weaving castes acted as wholesale merchants (master weavers). Wages to the weavers who depended on the master weavers generally fell or were stagnant, while the latter accumulated capital. Some master weavers started small workshops where a few weavers worked. Roy considers such capital accumulation and the formation of small capitalists the moving force behind the technological improvements in the handloom industry (Roy 2002, 1993).

7.5.3 Changes in Agrarian Society

HARUKA YANAGISAWA

The agrarian system of colonial south India came to be greatly integrated with the growing global economy through the development of commercial agriculture. The degree of integrity was further intensified by the construction of railways (see Map 7.8), opening of telecommunication, the Suez Canal, and other developments from the mid-nineteenth century


Indian Peninsula Railway
Hyderabad
① Madras & Southern Railway
② Madras & Pondicherry
③ Madras Railway
④ Madras, Nellore & Arcot Railway
⑤ Cuddapah & Hyderabad Railway
Future Plan ....
⑤
Bellary
④
Cuddapah
Nellore
④
④
Chittoor
Bangalore
Palamanair
Wallajahnuggur
Madras
Vellore
③
Vaniambady
Arcot
branch of ②
②
Mysore
Pondicherry
Salem
Ootacamund
Calicut
Coimbatore
Tanjore
Nagore
Ponany
Paulghent
Trichinopoly
①
Cranganore
Madura
Tuticorin
Tinnevelly

Map 7.8 Railways in South India
Source: Courtesy of Tsukasa Mizushima

onwards. Facilitated by these developments, the agrarian society had to go through structural changes within itself.

Tamil villages in the middle of the nineteenth century presented a far from egalitarian picture. In the irrigated villages of Tiruchirappalli, more than half the land was owned by those belonging to the upper castes, such as Brahmins and Vellalars. There were just a handful of upper-caste large owners, whereas the majority of the villagers, mainly consisting of low-caste non-Brahmins and Dalits, held no land or at the most owned a negligible area (see Table 7.7).[39] Such a concentration of ownership among a few people from the upper castes was quite common in other irrigated areas such as Thanjavur and Chingleput districts as well. The land owned by people from the upper castes was mainly cultivated either through a sharecropping system or by using permanent labourers like *paṇṇaiyāḷ*. Owners had to rely for the cultivation of their holdings principally on permanent labourers and undertenants—either low-caste non-Brahmins or Dalits (Yanagisawa 1996: chapter 2).

Agrarian society in Tamil Nadu, as we have noted, underwent a marked change after the 1870s. Three developments seem to have most strongly stimulated this change: the intensification of agricultural production, the emigration of lower- and upper-caste members to estates and urban areas respectively, and the integration of the south Indian agricultural economy into the world trade network under the colonial system.

Two different kinds of transformation took place in wet- and intermediate-zone villages in the British period. The first was the gradual change in the pattern of landownership earlier characterized by the dominance of owners from the upper castes. This was largely due to the growing emigration of agricultural labourers and other members of the lower castes to overseas estates, and so on, that not only provided them with alternative job opportunities but also stimulated the growth of their sense of independence. Available evidence indicates that, as a result, the upper-caste landowners found it increasingly difficult to get labourers and make them work as hard as before.[40] At the same time, a large number of upper-caste people left their villages for white-collar jobs and greater educational opportunities in urban areas. Their attention to agriculture and land management declined just at a time when agriculture was tending towards more intensive cultivation and farmers were increasingly feeling that greater and better yield would require greater care in cultivation rather than farming on a large scale.

These changes induced the upper-caste landowners to lease a part or all of their land, instead of cultivating it with the help of permanent labourers. Some of the latter, previously from the labourer class, raised their status to small tenants (though they still had to supplement their income by working as hired day workers) and evidence even shows instances of their becoming landholders by purchasing a small plot. Thus, there was an emergence of new holders from among the low-caste non-Brahmins and Dalits. On the other hand, there was the phenomenon of upper-caste owners not only leasing their land, but also, by selling part of it, reducing their holdings. As the case of the Tiruchirappalli villages clearly shows, the Brahmin community reduced the extent

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[39] Table 7.7 is compiled from *Settlement Registers of the Villages of the Lalgudi Taluk of the Trichinopoly District, c. 1865 and 1925.*

[40] *Madras District Gazetteers, Tanjore,* by F. R. Hemingway, Madras, 1906, p. 111. For the emigration of labourers to overseas estates, see Baker 1984, p. 101.

Table 7.7 Distribution of Areas by Size of Holdings: Fourteen Wet Villages in Lalgudi Taluk, Tiruchirappalli District, 1865 and 1925 (Acres)

Communities/titles	1865						1925					
of landholders	<2	<5	<15	<50	=<50	Total	<2	<5	<15	<50	=<50	Total
Brahmin	145	259	520	1,179	1,611	3,713	311	485	940	910	237	2,884
Non-Brahmin	246	480	1,043	974	1,209	3,957	990	863	969	439	1,068	4,328
Chetty	4	10	19	15	54	103	58	39	55	100	69	322
Muttiriyan	32	21	77	0	0	131	236	154	114	18	0	522
Nadan (Nadavan)	62	135	324	312	482	1,317	126	118	94	48	101	487
Pillai	42	117	180	200	460	1,000	131	86	194	84	553	1,047
Reddi	1	0	0	20	0	20	15	33	37	94	214	392
Udaiyan	26	74	171	79	0	352	127	193	292	15	76	703
Others	79	123	272	348	213	1,034	297	240	183	80	55	855
Dalits	1	3	0	0	0	4	117	13	8	0	0	138
Occupational titles	26	27	54	0	0	105	30	15	11	0	0	56
Muslim	9	12	9	0	268	298	64	16	17	0	109	206
Christian	10	12	28	0	0	49	89	21	21	0	0	132
Caste unknown, female	9	15	63	40	0	126	311	268	160	16	0	755
Temple	17	42	82	74	107	322	87	75	98	179	281	720
Others	127	127	264	290	259	1,066	152	66	17	1	0	231
Total	590	977	2,063	2,557	3,454	9,640	2,151	1,822	2,241	1,545	1,695	9,450

Source: Yanagisawa 1996, Tables 2.1 (p. 20) and 5.3 (p. 130).

of land they held, particularly after the 1890s. The reduction, it can be seen, was sharper in larger holdings (Table 7.7). This reflected the inability of high-caste traditional landowners in villages, though they still owned the largest share, to retain their former power by controlling ownership.

This transformation was accompanied by an important change in the type of agricultural labourer employed by farmers. Though the total number did not decrease, permanent labourers such as *paṇṇaiyāḷs* were gradually displaced by day workers. Former agricultural labourers who had been able to raise their status to small farmers by acquiring either small tenant holdings or small plots of their own hired themselves out as daily instead of permanent workers, since they now also had to cultivate their own farms. Added to this was a developing self-consciousness among these classes that stimulated a sense of aversion to servile employment. Thus the replacement of *paṇṇaiyāḷs* by day labourers probably reflected, in part, the progressive emancipation of these labourers from dominant landowners.

The other transformation in Tamil Nadu under British rule was the growth of non-Brahmin large landholders and the stratification of the non-Brahmin population. This change was mainly stimulated by the commercialization of south Indian agriculture and the integration of farmers into the world trade network, which probably led to the rise in rural indebtedness and the resultant decline of some small landowning farmers to tenant status. The other side of this process was the transfer of land to the newly rich, such as traders, moneylenders and others who had gained wealth by exploiting the economic opportunities created and developed under colonial rule. As shown by an analysis of data in the Village Settlement Registers (see Figure 7.12), some non-Brahmins considerably expanded their landed property this way, growing into large landholders, leading to stratification among people belonging to non-Brahmin communities (Yanagisawa 1996: chapter 5).

There has been debate over the pattern of the structural change that Indian agrarian societies witnessed under British colonial rule. Pointing to the mass dispossession of peasant landed properties and the emergence of non-agriculturist large landholders, a group of scholars, often called Nationalist Historians, have emphasized the disintegration and polarization of peasant society.[41] Criticising this view, Dharma Kumar has argued, based on an analysis of size-wise landholding data for Madras Presidency, that there is little evidence that 'the rich grew richer' during the hundred years after the mid-nineteenth century (Kumar 1975). The Settlement Registers for the Tiruchirappalli villages provide a key to reconciling these seemingly contradictory views. As seen above, the village data demonstrate statistically the development of these two trends, that is, one towards the stratification of the non-Brahmin population and the other towards a decline in large Brahmin landholdings, in the period between 1865 and 1925. If the data used does not identify the caste affiliation of landholders, the growth of large landholders from non-Brahmin communities is masked as it is offset statistically by a sharp decrease in large landholdings among Brahmin communities. Thus we can identify the growth of large landholders among non-agriculturalists and a trend towards polarization, as asserted by the Nationalist Historians, though the trend was shadowed by the contradictory movement of holdings by upper-caste landowners.

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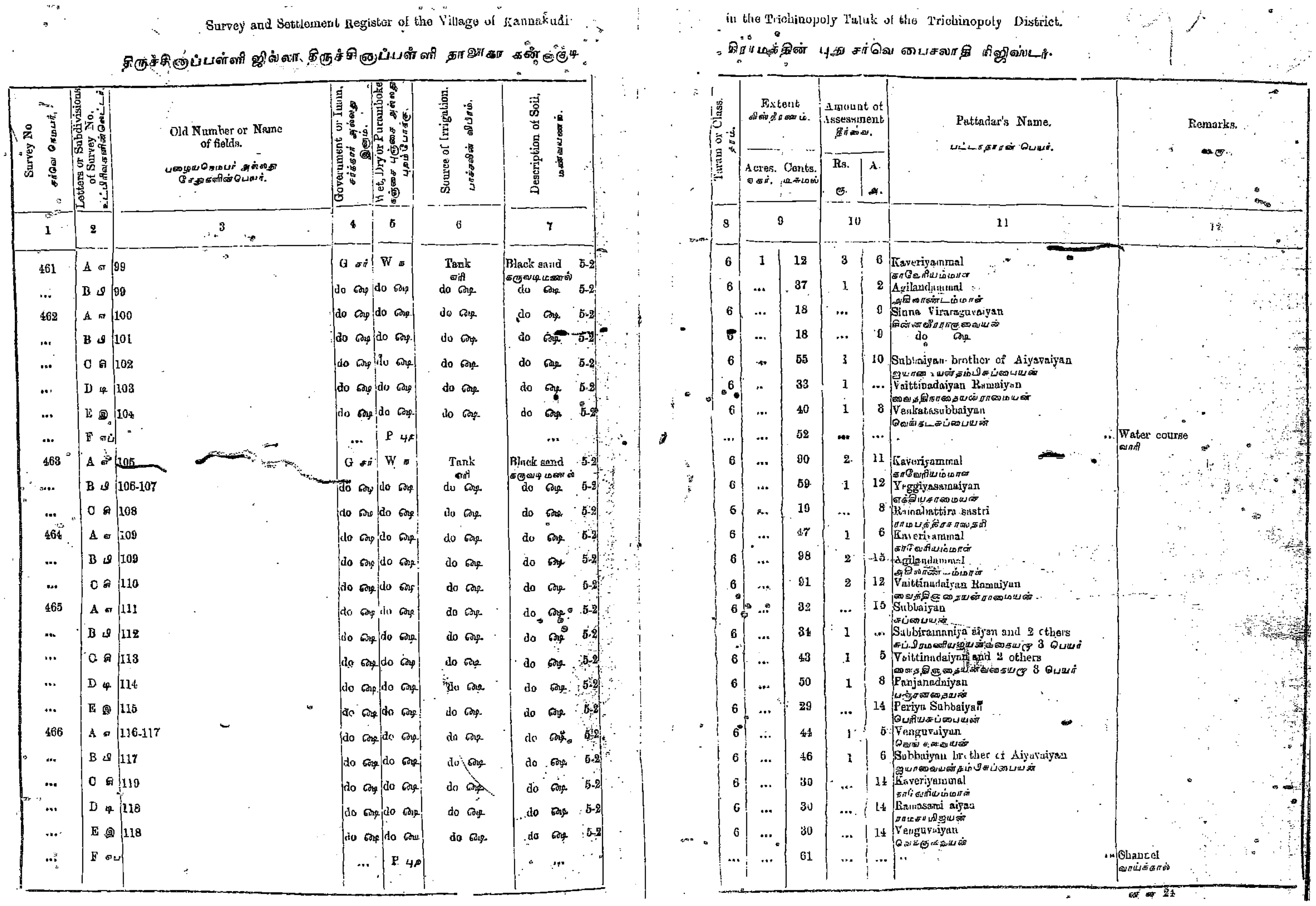
[41] For south India, Washbrook (1978) emphasized the trend towards rural social stratification.



Survey and Settlement Register of the Village of Kannakudi in the Trichinopoly Taluk of the Trichinopoly District.

திருச்சிருப்பள்ளி ஜில்லா, திருச்சிருப்பள்ளி தாலூகா கண்ணக்குடி கிராமத்தின் புது சர்வெ பைசலாதி ரிஜிஸ்டர்.

Survey No	Letters or Subdivisions of Survey No.	Old Number or Name of fields.	Government or Inam.	Wet, Dry or Purambokе	Source of Irrigation.	Description of Soil.	Taram or Class.	Extent Acres.	Extent Cents.	Amount of Assessment Rs.	Amount of Assessment A.	Pattadar's Name.	Remarks.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		10		11	12
461	A எ	99	G	W	Tank	Black sand 5-2	6	1	12	3	6	Kaveriyammal	
...	B பி	99	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	37	1	2	Agilandammal	
462	A எ	100	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	18	...	9	Sinna Viraraguvaiyan	
...	B பி	101	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	18	...	9	do	
...	C சி	102	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	55	1	10	Subbaiyan brother of Aiyavaiyan	
...	D டி	103	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	33	1	...	Vaittinadaiyan Ramaiyan	
...	E இ	104	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	40	1	8	Venkatasubbaiyan	
...	F எப்		...	P		...	...	...	52	...	...		Water course
463	A எ	105	G	W	Tank	Black sand 5-2	6	...	90	2	11	Kaveriyammal	
...	B பி	106-107	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	59	1	12	Yeggiyasamaiyan	
...	C சி	108	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	19	...	8	Ramabhattira sastri	
464	A எ	109	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	47	1	6	Kaveriyammal	
...	B பி	109	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	98	2	15	Agilandammal	
...	C சி	110	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	91	2	12	Vaittinadaiyan Ramaiyan	
465	A எ	111	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	32	...	15	Subbaiyan	
...	B பி	112	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	34	1	...	Subbiramaniya aiyan and 2 others	
...	C சி	113	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	43	1	5	Vaittinadaiyan and 2 others	
...	D டி	114	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	50	1	8	Panjanadaiyan	
...	E இ	115	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	29	...	14	Periya Subbaiyan	
466	A எ	116-117	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	44	1	5	Venguvaiyan	
...	B பி	117	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	46	1	6	Subbaiyan brother of Aiyavaiyan	
...	C சி	119	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	30	...	14	Kaveriyammal	
...	D டி	118	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	30	...	14	Ramasami aiyan	
...	E இ	118	do	do	do	do 5-2	6	...	30	...	14	Venguvaiyan	
...	F எப்		...	P		...	...	...	61	...	...		Channel

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Figure 7.12 Village Settlement Registers
Source: Courtesy of Haruka Yanagisawa.

It is important to reiterate, however, that though we perceive a weakening in the dominance of the upper castes, the extent is not such that it radically eroded the basic structure of landholding. Nor do we see a radical change in size-wise distribution of land. The growth in acquisition of large holdings by the non-Brahmin nouveaux riches offset the decline in large Brahmin holdings, resulting in no considerable change in the size-wise distribution. Although the area owned by the Dalits and low-caste non-Brahmins expanded after 1860s, it was too small to create a radical change in the landholding pattern as it accounted only for a small percentage of the total in terms of absolute acreage. Even though a considerable number of former agricultural labourers acquired or leased land, many Dalit families remained landless and had to work as full-time agricultural labourers. In addition, many small farmers of Dalit castes, who had emerged from the agricultural labourer class either by leasing or buying land, still had to supplement their income by working as coolie labourers. Low-caste non-Brahmins did not differ much from Dalits; they still had to hire themselves out as day labourers or cultivate land as tenants.

7.5.4 Social Movements: The Tamil Renaissance and New Identities

MIWAKO SHIGA

7.5.4.1 *Movements for the Enhancement of Caste Status*

Indian society witnessed changes caused both as a result of the formation of the colonial system as well as by the Indian response to it. One of the most crucial was the reconstruction of the caste system as the *varna–jāti* complex.

The caste system became even more rigid during British rule, in part through the official custom of attaching Brahmin Pandits to the British-established law courts. A body of Western-educated Brahmin lawyers tried to apply to all Hindus the Brahminical laws in which the distinction between *dwija* (twice-born) *varnas* (Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya), and others (Shudra)[42] affected judicial decisions. Thus, many Hindus inevitably became sensitive to the *varna* that their own *jāti* (caste) belonged to. Anthropological surveys on each caste's origins and customs and a decennial census that included data suggesting the ranking of castes also encouraged each caste to be more conscious of their status within the framework of 'Brahminical' Hinduism.

One of the most common responses to these changing circumstances was the attempt by the native population to raise one's own caste's relative position in the hierarchy by asserting that it belonged to a 'higher' *varna* than was recognized by others. A popular strategy for supporting this assertion was to imitate the customs adopted by an upper-caste or dominant community in the locality.[43] Though such a practice was not unheard of in the pre-colonial period, it became more prevalent under British rule. Vegetarianism and teetotalism permeated into the lower strata of the caste hierarchy. The Brahminical custom of prohibiting widow remarriage was also adopted by the lower castes, leading to further oppression of women. For example, the Pallis, who were traditionally agricultural labourers, started to abstain from alcohol and meat, adopt child marriage, and discourage widow remarriage, in order to claim a Kshatriya origin (Thurston 2010/1909: vol. 6, 1–12; Saraswathi 1974: 29–30). The punishment for transgression of new rules and norms was imposed not only on the offender but also on his/her domestic group. Ostracism was one of the more widespread and harsher sanctions. Members of each caste thus adjusted their way of life, even if some of them were reluctant to do so.[44]

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[42] The so-called untouchables were included in the Shudra category as there was no description of the former in the *Manusmriti*. Therefore, the British considered 'untouchables' an offshoot of the Shudras.

[43] M. N. Srinivas named this adaptation of the Brahminic way of life by a low caste as 'Sanskritization' (Srinivas 1952: 30). But in his later works he suggested that not only the customs of the Brahmins but also those of other 'dominant' castes in the region became a model for imitation by the lower castes (Srinivas 1966: 2–10).

A number of caste associations were formed in order to improve the caste's position in society. These associations utilized the British administrative institutions by submitting petitions to government officials that asserted their superior positions in the *varna–jāti* framework. For example, the Arya Vaishya Mahasabha, an organization of Komatis formed in 1906, petitioned the government to classify the Komatis as a *jāti* belonging to the vaishya *varna* and, accordingly, claimed rights appropriate to a *dwija varna*. The Kammalas similarly sought to enhance their ritual status through contact with the Census Commissioner's office. The Vanniars meanwhile requested that they be referred to as 'Vannia Kula Kshatriyas' in official documents; and the Pallas, an 'untouchable'[45] community, demanded that they be called 'Devendrakula Vellalas' (Geetha and Rajadurai 1998: 89).

However, not all of these attempts to upgrade communities' ritual status were successful, especially in the case of the so-called untouchables. These movements were often suppressed, sometimes through physical violence, by other castes that were also 'backward' but had comparatively higher status than the 'untouchables' in the ritual hierarchy. One group of Shanars, for instance, sought to shake off their traditional occupation of toddy-tapping and claimed the right to enter Hindu temples, thus aiming to enhance their status within the Brahminical framework of the caste system.[46] In 1899, when these Shanars claimed admission rights to Hindu temples, riots broke out in Tinnevelly; a group of Maravars attacked several Shanar villages and, in all, 23 murders, 102 dacoities, and many cases of arson were registered in connection with the riots (Thurston 2010/1909: vol. 6, 364). Realizing that their campaign to uplift their ritual status had been fruitless, the Shanars founded the Nadar Mahajana Sangam in 1910 with the purpose of improving their condition in more secular ways: taking practical measures for their social, moral, and intellectual advancement, promoting Western education, and encouraging commercial and industrial enterprise among the community (Hardgrave 1969: 129–32; Paramarthalingam 1995: 190–241).

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[44] Sometimes one part of a caste separated from the main body and accepted new customs. This resulted in the formation of a new caste.

[45] 'Untouchables' is a discriminatory term, even as 'outcastes' and *avarna* are. They are now officially described as 'the Scheduled Castes/Classes', but 'untouchables' choose to call themselves 'Adi Dravidas', 'Dalits', and so on. These terms reflect diverse socio-political stances and ideologies. However, here we use the term 'untouchables', because 'untouchability' in the Brahminical framework was the very problem that made their affliction different from other depressed sections of the population.

[46] This group preferred to be called by their caste title, 'Nadars', and they gradually separated themselves from the main body of Shanars.

7.5.4.2 *The Tamil Renaissance: Source of a New Identity*

The Tamil Renaissance presented an alternative to this trend of caste-based movements in late-nineteenth century south India. Iyothee Thassar, a Paraiah and Buddhist scholar, made efforts to abolish discrimination against 'untouchables' and elevate their social status. What set his effort apart from that of other nineteenth-century activists was that he worked not only for the caste that he belonged to, but for all other 'untouchable' castes as well, insisting that all 'untouchables' were the descendants of the ancient Buddhist natives of the subcontinent who had defended their faith, resisted the invaders, and had thus been relegated to the lowest strata of the conquerors' caste system (Geetha and Rajadurai 1998: 96–102). The possibility of unity across castes was suggested by his claim that a true Dravidian/Tamilian was one who neither believed in nor practised any caste divisions, since the caste-based way of life had been introduced by outsiders: the Arya-Brahmins (Aloysius 2010: 32).

Thassar's idea was an outcome of the Tamil Renaissance, which had started as a literary movement triggered by Indology, including comparative linguistics and ethnography, and had gradually come to provide the inspiration and theoretical foundations for the construction of a trans-caste identity of the non-Brahmin/Tamilian/Dravidian.

British administrators had long encouraged Indology, as it was linked to their effort to accumulate knowledge of Indian society, knowledge they considered indispensable for the stabilization of their rule. Warren Hastings, the Governor of Bengal, urged officials to learn the vernaculars, and this stance towards local society and culture stimulated research in linguistics and classical studies. Missionaries also contributed to the development of linguistics, as they enthusiastically studied Indian languages and published dictionaries and grammars besides translating the Bible into the vernaculars. Two missionaries, George Uglow Pope and Robert Caldwell, were especially instrumental in promoting Tamil studies by publishing a grammar and translating texts into English (see Figure 7.13).

These activities also heightened the native population's interest in their own languages and classical works. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Tamil literary activities were flourishing under the patronage of the

Figure 7.13 Statue of R. Caldwell in Chennai
Source: Courtesy of S. Rajagopal.

native princes and the British government. The Western-educated middle class participated as researchers, publishers, and readers of these literary works. A lot of Tamil classics were published, including the *Tolkāppiyam*, *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, *Tirukkōvaiyār*, *Cīvaka Cintāmaṇi*, *Pattuppāṭṭu*, *Cilappatikāram*, and *Maṇimēkalai*.

Two Tamil scholars played a particularly significant role in this field. Damodaram Pillai strived hard to reconstruct the original forms of Tamil classics by collecting and comparing multiple versions of palm-leaf copies from different periods, while U. V. Swaminatha Iyer discovered the names of old Tamil works that seemed to have been lost but to which there were allusions, and quotations from, in other manuscripts. Iyer then toured Tamil Nadu to collect manuscripts of these forgotten works and published them.

These classics seemed to provide revelations about the Tamil cultural heritage. Tamil scholars began to devote their attention to the task of painting a picture of the ancient Tamil/Dravidian civilization, which was portrayed as distinct from the Sanskrit/Aryan civilization. Caldwell's theory that Tamil culture had achieved a separate and independent existence before the Brahmins/Aryans[47] came to south India was reinterpreted in light of the rediscovered ancient Tamil literature. Non-Brahmins attempted to describe the Tamil/Dravidian civilization as egalitarian and democratic, exhibiting a clear contrast to the caste-ridden and inegalitarian Sanskrit/Aryan civilization. They put forward the view that the ancient egalitarian Tamil/Dravidian society was conquered by the Aryans, who then introduced the caste system in order to rule over the indigenous population. The Brahmins, according to this supposition, were the descendants of the Aryan invaders, while the non-Brahmins were the subcontinent's true natives (Arooran 1980: 15–34).[48] The formation of a new myth of their own origins and their degradation drove the non-Brahmin castes to establish a sense of identity and self-confidence as non-Brahmins/Dravidians.

7.5.4.3 *Inauguration of the Non-Brahmin Movement*

This new identity contributed to an inter-caste unity of non-Brahmins aimed at challenging Brahmin dominance. They inaugurated associations based on the new non-Brahmin identity, rather than a specific caste-based one. Some realized that educational qualifications were the main grounds for the ascendancy of Brahmins in government services, so education became an important focus. For example, the Madras Non-Brahmin Association, which was organized in 1909 with the intention of ameliorating the conditions of the non-Brahmin castes, encouraged non-Brahmin boys to pursue their studies by providing scholarships. The Madras United League, founded in 1912 by a small group of non-Brahmin government employees, similarly expanded into the educational realm: it ran an adult education class in the evening in addition to their primary activities of representing their grievances publicly (Arooran 1980: 41–2).

Thus, the Tamil Renaissance, the rise of a Dravidian consciousness, and the inauguration of the Non-Brahmin Movement are intimately connected.[49] The Non-Brahmin Movement, which started as an educational movement, would acquire a political mission in the 1910s, as will be explained in detail in section 8.1.1.

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[47] Caldwell used the word 'Brahmins' synonymously with 'Aryans'.

[48] In Sanskrit literature, there were a number of references to the population of south India as the *Dravidas*. This word was applied by Caldwell to a group of languages spoken mainly in the region—Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam, and Herbert Risley, the officer in charge of anthropological surveys, applied this term to what he discerned as a certain ethnicity. Thus the terms 'Aryan' and 'Dravidian' came to be used not only in the linguistic context but also in the contexts of race and culture.

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[49] The way of forming non-Brahmin identities differed among people of divergent language groups, particularly between Tamilians and others. The non-Brahmins in Tamil Nadu emphasized racial distinctions between themselves and the Brahmins. However, non-Tamil, non-Brahmins placed less emphasis on this presumption (Ramaswamy 1978: 298–9). This was mainly because social polarization was not as marked in the Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam areas as it was in Tamil territory (Irschick 1969: 176–7).

7.5.5 The Decline of the Matrilineal System in Modern Kerala

TOSHIE AWAYA

The origin of the matrilineal system of inheritance (*marumakkathāyam* in Malayalam) among the Nayars is yet to be clearly documented.[50] However, it is almost certain that the process of its disruption began during British colonial rule.[51]

The matrilineal joint family (called *taṟavāḍ*) consists of those who trace their lineage through their mother. Women and a woman's children belong to the woman's *taṟavāḍ* and children take the name of the mother's *taṟavāḍ*. Especially in central Kerala, women lived and stayed in their own *taṟavāḍs* where their husbands visited them. In those cases, it was possible for a woman to engage in multiple relationships with more than one man.

The eldest male member was called *kāraṇavan* and he acted as the head of the *taravāḍ*. Other members were called *anandaravans*. The taravāḍ property was thought to belong to all the members and was managed by the *kāraṇavan*. In this sense, the *marumakkathāyam* system was matrilineal, but not matriarchal. Even though we have no intention of idealizing matriliny, several aspects derived from it seem to have been congenial to women compared with situations among the patrilineal/upper-caste women in other areas. First, under *marumakkathāyam*, the birth of a girl was not considered 'unlucky'. Second, a woman's right to live in her natal house was guaranteed. Lastly, there were neither instances of extremes like child marriages, nor strong taboos against divorce and remarriage.

Around the 1870s, a move towards reform of the matrilineal system was becoming evident. The main promoters were those Nayars who had received English education, taken up white-collar jobs as lawyers, government officials, teachers, and so on, begun to earn their own incomes, and were influenced by the ideology of the 'modern nuclear family'. At the same time, becoming conscious of the fact that their marriage and inheritance customs under *marumakkathāyam* attracted curiosity as 'backward' and 'peculiar', they began to aspire to support the wife and children in place of the *kāraṇavan*, and leave the property to them.

The impact of the (modern) judicial system introduced by British rule was crucial to the change in *marumakkathāyam*. Although the new judicial system claimed to preserve 'traditional' matriliny, in fact it reinterpreted every aspect of the *marumakkathāyam* (Kodoth 2001). As a result, the rights/duties of

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[50] For instance, M. G. S. Narayanan suggested a tribal origin for the matrilineal system (Narayanan 2013 [1996]: 292–3).

[51] Though Nayars were not the only group in Kerala that followed the matrilineal system, in this survey our discussion is mainly confined to them.

*kāraṇavan*s and *anadaravan*s were fixed and it became possible for these to be contested in court. For example, although the judicial interpretation strengthened the right/authority of the *kāraṇavan*, it allowed, at the same time, the *anandaravan*s to file lawsuits against the *kāraṇavan* when he was considered to have acted against the interests of the *taravāḍ*. It is interesting to note that the friction between *kāraṇavan*s and *anandaravan*s has been a staple theme in the novels and the autobiographies of the Nayars in Kerala.[52]

It was the judicial interpretation of the Nayars' customary marriage (*sambandham*) that seems to have made their intellectuals uneasy. The Madras High Court declared in 1869, with regard to the marital relation under *aḷiyasantāna* (the matrilineal system found in south Canara) that 'the relation is in truth not marriage, but a state of concubinage into which *the woman enters of her own choice and is at liberty when and as often as she pleases*' (emphasis added).[53] In 1883, the same court delivered a similar judgment:

> That the Aḷiyasantāna law did not recognize such cohabitation as marriage appeared to be shown by the circumstance that it founds upon it no rights of property or inheritance.... The customary cohabitation of the sexes under Aḷiyasantāna law appears to us to do no more than create a *casual relation, which the woman may terminate at her pleasure....* (emphasis added)[54]

Although both cases were not related to the *marumakkathāyam*, but only to the *aḷiyasantāna* system, English-educated Nayars naturally understood that these judgments were legal opinions applicable to the *sambandham* relationship too, considering that in the *aḷiyasantāna* area there was no visiting husband custom. It is also to be noted that as the highlighted portion of the court's judgment shows, the apparent initiatives on the side of women regarding the continuity or/and termination of the relation was one of the justifications for denying its legality in court.

When C. Sankaran Nair introduced his Malabar Marriage Bill in the Madras Legislative Council in 1890, he stated, 'The effect of the law is such that our wives are concubines and our children bastards in a court of law....'[55] This bill resulted, after a number of revisions, in the Malabar Marriage Act of 1896. Its main purpose was to legalize the *sambandham* and to make wives and children (not nephews and nieces) the inheritors of intestate property of their husbands/fathers. Additionally, guardianship was to shift from *kāraṇavan*s to husbands/fathers. Evidently, these provisions reflected the aspirations of educated Nayars who began to yearn for separate incomes and wished to leave the property to their own 'family'.

The Malabar Marriage Act was a permissive law. Though its effect appears to have been nominal when we look at the small number of registrations under the act, it was actually considerable in the sense that it marked the beginning of a series of new regulations/laws regarding *marumakkathāyam* not only in British Malabar, but in the Travancore and Cochin states as well, which drastically changed the matrilineal social structure.[56]

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[52] Chandu Menon 1965 [1889] and Dev 1966, to mention only one example each from novels and autobiographies respectively.

[53] Madras High Court Reports, vol. 4, p. 196.

[54] (1885) Indian Law Reports (Madras series), vol. 8, p. 353.

[55] *Abstract of the Proceedings of the Council of the Governor of Fort St. George, 1890 and 1891*, vol. XX, Madras: Government Press, 1892.

[56] The matrilineal system was legally abolished by the Kerala Joint Family System (Abolition) Act, 1976.

Partha Chatterjee in one of his influential articles argued that Indian male intellectuals regarded the 'inner (family)' domain as the only area where they could retain sovereignty and that they tried to keep British power out of reach of this domain (Chatterjee 1989). It seems that his argument does not apply to the case under consideration, that is, the 'reform' of *marumakkathāyam*. Nayar reformers demanded British interference in the 'family' domain through judicial/legislative mediation (Mody 2008).

Like other social reform movements of the nineteenth century, the 'reform' of *marumakkathāyam* was also initiated and led by male intellectuals and the contribution of women was restricted. For instance, women were not invited to give any opinions regarding the Malabar Marriage Bill. When we look through the articles written by Nayar women in Malayalam women's journals appearing from the early twentieth century, their interest in *marumakkathāyam* reform is unexpectedly low (Awaya 2003; Devika 2005). They seem to share the view, with male reformers, that *marumakkathāyam* appeared backward. Their concern was mainly '*parishkāram* (reform)' in general, especially the promotion of female education, the content of which tends to be that which creates a 'good wife/wise mother'. To the extent to which they idealized 'companionate marriage', women shared with male reformers the ideal of the (patrilineal) 'modern family'. It is true that Nayar women attributed to their high literacy rate, sometimes with a certain degree of exaggeration, the fact that Keralite women were free from the difficulties that afflicted other Indian women.[57] Yet, they hardly tried to explore this phenomenon by connecting it with their matrilineal background.

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[57] For the problem involved in Nayar women's tacit assumption as to their representative position as Keralite women, see Awaya 2003.

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CHAPTER 8

Twentieth Century

Independence and After

8.1 TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE: POLITICS, SOCIETY, AND ECONOMY

8.1.1 The Non-Brahmin Movement

MIWAKO SHIGA

The struggle for independence in India was, at the same time, a struggle for national integration. While the Indian National Congress (INC), a leading body in the nationalist movement, did not disapprove of the subcontinent's diversity of religions and languages, it nonetheless aimed to establish a uniform identity for the 'Indian nation' in the public sphere. This 'Indian nation' imagined by the Congress nationalists contained several problems. First, it had the unmistakable colour of Hinduism. Second, this Hinduism was equivalent to Brahminical Hinduism. Third, it gave the honoured position of national language to Hindi. Fourth, it gave highest priority to a united struggle against the British, and therefore discouraged other struggles among Indians, such as labour movements, peasant movements, and caste conflicts.

As such, the Congress-led nationalist movement provoked diverse opposition. Its overtly Hindu character inspired intransigence in some religious minorities such as Muslims, and the uncompromising attitude of some Hindu groups toward minorities threatened to spark religious conflict. Its inclination to Brahminical ideals made the lower-caste Hindus cautious and sceptical. Further, as regionalism and linguistic nationalism grew, so did the communist-led class struggles that represented the discontent of labourers and peasants.

What was especially significant in the south was the emergence of the non-Brahmin movement as a complex of caste conflict, linguistic nationalism, and class struggle. The movement expressed its objection to the 'Indian' nationalism of the Congress by foregrounding the 'non-Brahmin' identity, which was linked both to 'Dravidian'/'Tamilian' and 'the poor'. This section will expose the problems of 'Indian' nationalism by analysing the characteristics of the Non-Brahmin Movement.

8.1.1.1 *The Formation of Brahminical–Hinduistic Nationalism*

World War I was a political turning point in Madras Presidency. During the war, India was forced to respond to the needs of the British with men and materials. This prompted the nationalists to commence a movement all over India demanding 'Home Rule' as a reward for their sacrifices. One of the movement's centres was the city of Madras. Annie Besant, a British citizen of Irish origin, a Theosophist, and a member of the Indian National Congress launched the Home Rule Movement in Madras. She had long been active and prominent in the field of education, setting up the Central Hindu College at Benares with the aim of building a new leadership for India. The future leaders of India should, according to her, have self-confidence and self-respect, and therefore should recognize the greatness of the 'Indian civilization'. The Indian civilization she imagined, however, was almost synonymous with the Sanskrit–Brahminical Hindu tradition. This was a highly controversial idea in the socio-political context of south India, where the non-Brahmins were intensifying both their sense of rivalry against the Brahmins and their identity as non-Brahmins/Dravidians, as explained in section 7.5.4.[1]

The non-Brahmins worried that the realization of Home Rule would inevitably lead to the acquisition of political power by the Brahmins. Their apprehension was not groundless, as the Brahmins were dominant in the leadership of both the Home Rule League[2] and the Madras Provincial Congress. Most of the non-Brahmin leaders of this period belonged to the landowning and merchant castes such as the Vellalas, the Chettis, and the Reddis. They aspired to political power and official influence commensurate with their wealth and status in society. The Non-Brahmin Movement, therefore, put priority on political activities instead of the educational activities encouraged by the emergence of the Home Rule Movement.

8.1.1.2 *The Non-Brahmin Manifesto and the Establishment of the Justice Party*

In November 1916, prominent non-Brahmins led by T. M. Nair and Tyagaraja Chetti established the South Indian People's Association for the purpose of publishing English, Telugu, and Tamil newspapers to give voice to non-Brahmin grievances. In the following month, they published the Non-Brahmin Manifesto, which claimed that non-Brahmins had not been given political rewards commensurate with their socio-economic status, notwithstanding the fact that they comprised 40 million of the 40.5 million population of Madras Presidency and the bulk of the taxpayers. Their manifesto pointed out that the inferior status of non-Brahmins exhibited a striking contrast with that of the Brahmins, who were dominant in the fields of education, civil service, and legislation, despite their numerical inferiority. Opposing the Home Rule Movement, the manifesto clarified the Non-Brahmin Movement's opposition to any measure designed to undermine the influence and authority of the British rulers. It would be too hasty, however, to conclude that the non-Brahmins were thus pro-British. The manifesto also stated:

> [the British rulers] alone in the present circumstances of India are able to hold the scales even between creed and class and to develop the sense of unity and national solidarity without which India will continue to be a congeries of mutually exclusive and

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[1] Another centre of the Home Rule Movement was Bombay, where B. G. Tilak was a leading figure. He mobilized mass support for nationalism and designed new devices for 'national' unity—for example, he created the Shivaji festival, and transformed the traditional household worship of Ganesha into the public Ganesha festival. The adoption of Shivaji and Ganesha as 'national' symbols, however, had the effect of accelerating the exclusivist feeling between the Hindus and the Muslims.

[2] Besant was sometimes called 'the head of Smartha Brahmins', *Non-Brahmins*, 11 February 1917.

warring groups without a common purpose and a common patriotism.[3]

In other words, the non-Brahmins' idea was that India should make progress toward self-government only when the social exclusiveness and rigidity of class and caste disappeared.

The Home Rule League criticized this manifesto, condemning it as 'unpatriotic'.[4] The League's severe and emotional response succeeded only in further provoking the antipathy of the non-Brahmins.[5] T. M. Nair, Tyagaraja Chetti, and other non-Brahmin leaders formed the South Indian Liberal Federation, which increased active opposition to the League by voicing the political views of non-Brahmins. The federation was called the Justice Party after its English organ, *Justice* (Irschick 1969: 47).

On 10 August 1917, Edwin Montagu, Secretary of State for India, announced in the House of Commons the British policy of increasing the participation of Indians in the colony's administration and of the gradual development of self-governing institutions. This declaration was significant in that it mentioned, for the first time, the possibility of self-government in the future. The publication of the related scheme of Government Reforms in 1918 thus created a rift among the nationalists. Some were dissatisfied with these reforms and favoured rejecting them outright, while others were inclined to accept them. In contrast, the Justice Party, looking forward to the acceptance of the reforms and the party's participation in the possible legislative institutions, led an energetic campaign. They petitioned the Reform Committee for the representation of non-Brahmins and attempted to expand their base of support among the electorate.

The Justice Party requested a separate electorate for non-Brahmins in the Provincial Legislative Council, as the Muslims had been granted this by the Morley–Minto Reforms in 1909. The Muslim community was a religious minority, while the non-Brahmins were a numerical majority. This was the point that the Justice Party wanted to emphasize: the non-Brahmins were oppressed by the minority Brahmins and could not acquire the political status proper to their numerical strength without some protective measures.

The leaders of the Justice Party realized that if they intended to represent the 'non-Brahmins', they should define who the non-Brahmins were. In order to expand their support, they turned their attention to the so-called untouchables,[6] who composed about twenty per cent of the total population of Madras Province. T. M. Nair, who was in favour of ending caste discrimination, took the initiative in appealing to the 'untouchable' population and organized a meeting of 'untouchables' on 2 October 1917 (Irschick 1969: 71; Rajaraman 1988: 85). Articles supporting the Tiyyas,[7] who were demanding the right to use certain roads outside the Tali

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[3] 'The Non-Brahmin Manifesto' (Irschick 1969: Appendix 1).

[4] *New India*, 20 December, 1916.

[5] *West Coast Spectator*, 28 December 1916.

[6] 'Untouchables' is a discriminatory term, with much the same connotation as 'outcastes' and *avarna*. 'Untouchables' are officially described as 'the Scheduled Castes/Classes'. Gandhi and his followers named them 'Harijans', but many 'untouchables' choose to call themselves 'Dalits', 'Adi Dravidas', and so on. All of these terms reflect diverse socio-political positions and ideologies. This chapter uses the term 'untouchables' in order to make it clear that the abolition of untouchability was one of the most crucial political issues of the 1920s and 1930s.

[7] The Tiyyas are a group of the Ezhavas, traditionally a toddy-tapping community in Kerala. The Ezhavas were not allowed to enter Hindu temples or even use the roads outside temples. A group of Ezhavas who lived in Malabar called themselves Tiyyas and claimed higher status than that of the other Ezhavas.

Temple in Malabar, appeared in the journals published by the Justice Party.[8] Even Muslims and Christians were included in the category of 'non-Brahmins' because they, according to the party, were also oppressed by the Brahmins.[9]

It is important to note that in September 1917 the Madras Presidency Association (MPA) was founded as the non-Brahmin wing of the Congress and similarly sought communal representation. This meant that non-Brahmin political discontent was not uncommon even within the Congress and that the Justice Party was not the sole representative of non-Brahmins in south India.[10]

The Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms provided the non-Brahmins with the separate representation they had sought by means of seat reservation in the Madras Legislative Council. In the first election under the Reform, held in November 1920, an electorate that comprised very well-to-do non-Brahmins gave the Justice Party a large majority.

The Congress, meanwhile, had boycotted the elections as part of its protest against the Rowlatt Act, the atrocity in Amritsar and injustice against the Khilafat (Caliph). However, a large number of Congress leaders in Madras Presidency were reluctant to boycott it, being conscious of the Justice Party's presence. Its 'non-violent non-cooperation' movement against the British government was, therefore, rather reluctantly inaugurated by leaders in Madras City such as S. Satyamurthi and Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, and received less support and poor response. The 'official' direction by the Congress Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee was to appeal to upper- and middle-class professionals to surrender their honours and to boycott their work for the government. But few people responded positively to the appeal (Sarkar 1983: 213).

This, however, does not mean that participation in the movement was limited to a few professionals. In Madras City, tramway workers and the Corporation employees struck work.[11] The movement sometimes heightened the existing discontent among the mass population like peasants, leaseholders, tribes in the hill area, and labourers. For example, the Muslims in Malabar called Moplahs, who had already started agitating against Hindu landlords for tenancy rights, were encouraged by Non-Cooperation and Khilafat movement leaders to articulate their dissatisfaction. After the arrest of Congress and Khilafat leaders, the Moplahs adopted 'violent' measures to solve their problem. Congress leaders in Madras City, like E. L. Iyer, M. Singaravelu Chetti, V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar, and V. Chakkarai Chetti, tried to utilize the strike at the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills managed by the British company. But because they could not understand the problems involved, their leadership was found wanting by the millworkers.[12]

The movement was vigorous in the 'peripheral' area of the Presidency, Andhra, with eminent leaders such as B. Pattabhi Sitarammaya and T. Prakasam. Prakasam had played an eminent role in the agitation protesting the partition of Bengal in 1905, which stirred in Telugu-speaking people an interest in their own language and history and a consciousness of 'Andhra' as a part of 'Aryan India' in contrast to the Dravidian sentiment in Tamil-speaking areas. This fact could partly explain the strength of Non-Cooperation movement in Andhra region[13]. One of the fiercest struggles in this area was in Chirala and Parala where the residents resisted the government's move to integrate the two into a municipality and to raise local taxes. Inspired by the spirit of Non-Cooperation, they rejected tax payment and abandoned their land in protest. Another powerful struggle in Andhra was the refusal to pay land revenue in the delta region (Sarkar 1983: 215).

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[8] *Justice*, 15 May, 1917.

[9] *Qaumi Report*, 6 February, 1917.

[10] P. Kesava Pillai, Kalyanasundaram Mudaliar, E. V. Ramaswami Naicker, and P. Varadarajulu Naidu were prominent in the MPA. The leadership of the MPA came from the same socio-economic groups as those of the Justice Party, that is, well-educated, middle-class non-Brahmins. What differed was that the Justice Party's leadership included more large landowners than the MPA. The Justice Party accused the MPA of being a tool of the Brahmins for reducing the popularity of the party (Irschick 1969: 61).

[11] Government of Madras, *Fortnightly Report*, first and second half of January 1921.

[12] The Government of Madras, *Fortnightly Report*, June, July, and August 1921.

Gandhi's sudden decision to suspend all movements soon after the Chauri Chaura incident frustrated activists, who were by now disillusioned with the Congress. Congress members were also confused as to how to break out of the political stagnation. Some of them followed Gandhi's constructive programme, and others found a way by participating in the legislature. The latter outnumbered the former in Madras Presidency.

8.1.1.3 *The Socio-Religious Radicalism of the Self-Respect Movement and the Crisis of National Unity*

The political changes introduced under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were especially significant in Madras Province, since they provided opportunities for Non-Brahmin leaders to implement their ideology through legislative measures. The Justice Party, which came to power as a result of the 1920 election, contributed to the political empowerment of the non-Brahmins. It issued the first communal government order in 1921 and the second in 1922, both of which institutionalized reservation in the government service for non-Brahmins.

But as far as social reforms were concerned, there was discord within the party. Though T. M. Nair, C. Natesa Mudaliar, O. Kandasami Chetti, and a few other leaders advocated social reforms, the majority of members were rather conservative (Pandian 2007: 151). This conservativeness was exemplified in the enactment process of the Madras Hindu Religious Endowment Bill of 1922, which was introduced by the Justice Party. The bill provided that the temple committees would consist both of members appointed by the provincial government and elected ones. This provision gave rise to apprehension in many of the Legislative Council members about the participation of 'untouchables' in these temple committees. For instance, K. Prabhakaran Tampan complained, 'The Bill provides that committees should be elected by voters whose qualifications have been laid down without regard to the classes of the people who are entitled to worship in the temples.... [In Guruvayur and Tiruvangad] the Tiyyas form a major portion of the population and will naturally become voters under this Bill. Thus it will be very easy for them to get into the committees and into the temples.'[14] But such apprehensions were groundless, as it was noted that '[Clause] 42 of the Bill distinctly respects established usages ... and the government will not act the part of a social reformer by introducing any drastic changes into the constitution of these committee members'.[15] The notes of the bill in fact stated that Clause 42 was 'intended to protect long-established customs and usages in the temple'.[16] In practice, this meant that the bill denied temple-entry rights to 'untouchables'. The Justice Party, despite its professed support for the uplift of 'non-Brahmins'—including 'untouchables'—in 'secular' fields, often became instead an obstacle to socio-religious reform after they took office. Grievances gradually accumulated among the lower non-Brahmin castes, especially the 'untouchables'.

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[13] Sitaramayya and Prakasam participated in the Andhra movement led by Konda Venkatappayya, which demanded a separate province for the Telugu-speaking area.

[14] *The Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor of Madras*, vol. 10, 943.

E. V. Ramaswami Naicker (EVR), a member of the Congress, stood up to redress these grievances. When a conflict arose over the right of Ezhavas to use the roads in front of a temple in Vaikom in Travancore state, he organized an agitation supporting the Ezhavas.[17] He was disgusted by the uncooperative or negative attitudes of other Congress members towards the struggle. For example, C. Rajagopalachari, in a letter addressed to EVR, criticized his stance and counselled caution. M. K. Gandhi demanded withdrawal of 'non-Hindu' leaders from the conflict, saying that the issue was related to the Hindu community and should not be 'interfered' with by 'outsiders'. Gandhi's compromise in the Gurukulam controversy[18] further frustrated EVR. Disappointed by Gandhi's advocacy of Varnashrama Dharma, EVR finally left the Congress in 1925. The Justice Party, however, did not satisfy him either.

In 1925, EVR launched the Self-Respect Movement, which at first criticized customs such as the ban on inter-caste dining and marriage as the foundations of caste discrimination. Gradually sharpening his radical ideas, he aimed to totally abolish the caste system, and went even further by rejecting Hinduism itself. Hinduism, in his opinion, merely nurtured superstition by authorizing caste hierarchy. He and his followers campaigned in numerous districts, promoting inter-caste dining, inter-caste marriage, non-religious marriage ceremonies, and pushing for the abolition of untouchability and child marriage.[19] His radicalism exhibited a contrast to the Justice Party's previous non-Brahminism, to the point that the Self-Respect Movement demanded that each non-Brahmin should not just criticize

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[15] *The Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor of Madras*, vol. 10, 928.

[16] The Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Bill, 1922, Appendix, Government order 272, 5 December 1922, Law (Legislative) Department, Government of Madras.

[17] This conflict is called the Vaikom Satyagraha. It started as a protest against the Travancore State Government, which had barred T. K. Madhavan, an Ezhava lawyer, from entering the court inside the palace. Vaikom was chosen as the scene of the protest because it had a long history in the temple-entry movement by 'untouchables'. At first, this satyagraha was led by three Malayalis, T. K. Madhavan, K. P. Kesava Menon, a Nayar, and George Joseph, a Syrian Christian. But the Travancore state police arrested all of them. EVR was then invited and took over their leadership (Diel 1978: 10–13; Joseph 2003: 158–82).

[18] In 1925, a controversy arose on the issue of separate dining, which was enforced between Brahmin and non-Brahmin students at a school called the Shermadevi Gurukulam in Kallidaikurichi. The Gurukulam was established in 1922 by a Brahmin Congressman, but was financially supported by non-Brahmins such as the Nattukottai Chettis. The Tamil Nadu Congress Committee also contributed to organization expenses. EVR and several Congress members criticized the fact that non-Brahmin students were forced to sit separately from Brahmin students in the same dining room. Gandhi intervened to settle the dispute, and suggested that all students dine in the same row but that the cook be a Brahmin (Irschick 1969: 269–70; Arooran 1980: 155–6).

[19] Report 1427c, Deputy Inspector-General of Police, 22 June 1934, *Under Secretary Secret Safe File 896*.

Brahmins but play a role in destroying the entire caste system.

The Self-Respect Movement's attack on all religions ran parallel to its inclination towards the Left movement. Toward the end of the 1920s, EVR began to criticize religion in general, pointing out that people attributed all inequality—such as that between poverty and wealth, workers and exploiters, and servants and masters—to 'Karma' or god's will, and that they were therefore deprived of the will or intention to change the existing society.[20] With the spread of communism and the wave of labour movements during the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s,[21] EVR came to realize that economic problems as well as socio-religious ones should be solved in order to improve the living conditions of the suffering lower castes (see Figure 8.1).

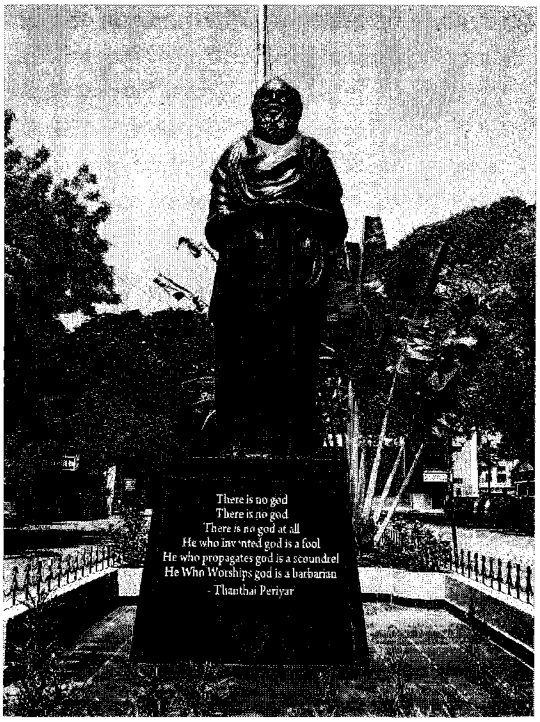
There is no god
There is no god
There is no god at all
He who invented god is a fool
He who propagates god is a scoundrel
He Who Worships god is a barbarian
- Thanthai Periyar

Figure 8.1 Ramaswami Naicker's Statue in DK Complex in Chennai
Source: Courtesy of Miwako Shiga.

The Self-Respecters publicly declared their Left inclination with the resolutions adopted at the Self-Respect Conference held at Tuticorin in 1931. The resolutions condemned the execution of Bhagat Singh and stated that the socialism and communism that he and his compatriots upheld would benefit India.[22] EVR visited Europe and Soviet Russia from the end of 1931 to the end of 1932, and soon after his return announced the socialistic 'Erode Programme'. This programme declared as its goals the attainment of complete independence from the British and other forms of capitalistic government, the opposition to public ownership without compensation of all agricultural land and forests, the cancellation of all private debts and other obligations incurred by workers and peasants, improvement of the lives of workers and peasants through increased wages, and state aid for the unemployed.[23]

Kuti Arasu (People's Government), a Tamil periodical published by EVR from 1924 onward, contained articles introducing the ideas of the Self-Respect Movement and communism,[24] which were read out aloud to the illiterate and publicized among the lower castes/classes. EVR himself was enthusiastic about delivering speeches in order to spread the aims of the Self-Respect Movement and of communism. For example, in 1934, in a span of just four months, he delivered speeches in 44 places in Tamil districts.[25] Fluent and rendered in simple language, they had a powerful impact on audiences (Sreenivasan 1980: 64).

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[20] *Religion and Society: Selections from Periyar's Speeches and Writings*, 6–7.

[21] In Madras Province, the labour movement was active, and strikes frequently occurred in Madras, Madurai, Tinnevelly, Coimbatore, and other industrial cities even in the 1930s.

[22] Report 1427c, Deputy Inspector-General of Police, 22 June 1934, *Under Secretary Secret Safe File 896*.

[23] 'The Aims and Ideals of the Self-Respect Party of South India', Appendix C, Report 1427c, Deputy Inspector-General of Police, 22 June 1934, *Under Secretary Secret Safe File 896*.

[24] *Kuti Arasu* was banned because of its communistic nature, but it was relaunched under the new titles of *Puratci* in 1933 and then *Pakuttarivu* in 1934.

It is worth noting that EVR's speeches and writings during the first half of the 1930s, when the Self-Respect Movement was most communistic, did not specify a target of attack. Instead it allowed the audience and readers to interpret their own 'enemy' according to their own socio-economic context. For example, in his speeches, the terms 'high castes', 'the rich', and 'government' were used interchangeably. He left room for these terms to be imagined in different ways in different contexts by different audiences. This could stem from two reasons. First, at meetings that attracted a vast audience from different socio-economic backgrounds, it was sometimes more effective and influential to leave the object of criticism vague. Second, he sought to avoid being tagged as 'seditious' according to the Criminal Procedure Code or the Indian Penal Code. When communist organizations were banned in 1934, the Self-Respect Movement, while observing the formalities of the law, sheltered communists and contributed to the spread of their ideology.

Communists in Tamil Nadu such as M. Singaravelu were relatively independent of the Communist International in Moscow, and as this gave them room to take recourse to their own strategy, many chose to cooperate with the Self-Respect Movement in the late 1920s and the 1930s. They even bolstered the Self-Respect League[26] and its branches in EVR's stead during his absence, and launched a new organization called the Samadharma Party as a political wing of the Self-Respect Movement. They contributed articles to *Kuti Arasu*, *Puratchi*, *Pakuttarivu*, and *Vituthalai*, and delivered speeches alongside Self-Respect Movement members. These activities led to the rise of young communists such as P. Jeevanandan and S. Ramanathan in the Tamil regions. The Government of Madras branded as communist organizations the Self-Respect League (47 branches), Samadharma Party (20 branches), and the Rationalist and Truth-Seekers' Association, another organization related to the Self-Respect Movement (10 branches) and tried, but failed to ban them, because the Advocate-General decided that these organizations did not infringe on any laws.[27] The strategy of diluting its communistic colour to keep the movement in existence was successful.

8.1.1.4 *The Congress Ministry's Counter-Policies against the Self-Respect Movement*

From the latter half of the 1920s onward, the 'Indian nation' was exposed to the danger of disintegration because of the emergence of Hindu nationalism, communal violence, 'untouchables' claims to rights as a separate community, and sharp class conflicts all over the country. In the Madras Province, or the Tamil districts to be more precise, the Self-Respect Movement—a radical stream of the Non-Brahmin Movement with its multiple identities of the 'oppressed' such as non-Brahmins, Dravidians, and the poor, harried Hindu society from within, guided by the 'oppressed' majority's point of view while at the same time calling for the masses to unite under the linguistic and ethnic identity of Tamilian/Dravidian and the class consciousness of 'the poor'. Some members of the Tamil Nadu Congress thus saw a need for launching effective policies to counter the Non-Brahmin Movement.

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[25] Letter 1085c, Special Branch, Criminal Investigation Department, to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, 11 May 1933, *Under Secretary Secret Safe File 839.*

[26] The Self-Respect League was established following the decisions of the Self-Respect Conference held in Chingleput in 1929.

[27] Opinion, P. Venkataramamurthy, Advocate-General, 9 May, 1933, *Under Secretary Secret Safe File 839.*

After the Non-Cooperation Movement ended up somewhat dismally, the Tamil Nadu Congress suffered a shortage of both funds and membership. Its leadership was divided over the issue of tactics with regard to the government. On one side was Rajagopalachari who, as a Gandhian and a No-Changer in the 1920s, adopted a constructive programme of boycotting liquor shops and British cloth shops. On the other side was S. Sathyamurti, a Changer and Swarajist in 1920s, who had always been in favour of participating in elections and taking office. Because of the presence of the Justice Party and Self-Respect Movement, even Rajagopalachari's side was hesitant about obeying the directive in early 1930 that all Congress legislators should resign and wait for Gandhi's instructions on the precise intensity of the non-violent movement. Therefore, Congress leaders in Tamil Nadu were reluctant to join the Civil Disobedience Movement, which was launched following the Congress Working Committee's decision on 15 February 1930.

However, once the campaign started, the Tamil Congress members were fully committed to it and found that the campaign gathered broader support than the Non-Cooperation Movement did in the 1920s. Manufacture of salt by boiling sea water, the Salt March,[28] and police brutality against these non-violent struggles attracted much attention, especially among the youth. Through the Civil Disobedience Movement, the Tamil Congress strengthened its organization with many branches and established a firm footing in Tamil society. The leaders again aspired to join the legislature (Arnold 1977: 118–40, Sundararajan 1989: 462–80).

Finally in 1935, the Congress in Tamil Nadu decided to seek formal political power. Even Rajagopalachari decided that the unity and strength of the Congress was more important than the Changer/No-Changer division (Irschick 1986: 179–85).

The Congress won the Madras Legislative Assembly elections held in 1937 and formed a ministry with Rajagopalachari as chief minister. Soon after taking office, he made public two policies: the abolition of untouchability and the adoption of Hindi as the national language. From the provisions of the bills he introduced, it is clear that his most urgent and important objective was to attain the unity of the Indian nation, which was endangered by the Non-Brahmin Movement.

The existence of the Non-Brahmin Movement differentiated the attitude of Congress members in Madras Province towards 'untouchables' from that of their counterparts elsewhere. For Rajagopalachari in particular, who was enthusiastic about establishing an Indian national identity among the people, the annihilation of untouchability was directly correlated with the unity of the Hindus and the protection of Hinduism—in opposition to the Non-Brahmin Movement, which split the Hindu community into Brahmins and non-Brahmins and condemned the artificiality of the caste system and the 'oppressiveness' of Hinduism. In due course, the 'nation' here became almost synonymous with the Hindu nation.

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[28] The Salt March to Dandi led by Gandhi had thousands of participants. Sarojini Naidu, a prominent Congress leader and poet, encouraged women to take part in the campaign. While Gandhi marched along the west coast, Rajagopalachari held a salt march in parallel on the east coast from Tiruchirappalli to Vedaranyam village.

Rajagopalachari was quite cautious in launching religious reform through government initiatives.[29] He thus took several steps to realize this reform, drafting four bills for the abolition of discrimination against 'untouchables':

1. A bill to provide for the removal of social disabilities among certain classes of Hindus, moved by M. C. Rajah in March 1937.
2. A bill to remove the disabilities of the so-called depressed classes in regard to entry into Hindu temples, moved by M. C. Rajah in August 1938.[30]
3. A bill to remove the disabilities of certain classes of Hindus in regard to entry into temples in the district of Malabar (The Malabar Temple Entry Bill), moved by Rajagopalachari in December1938.
4. A bill to authorize and indemnify trustees, officers, and other persons in respect of entry into and offer of worship in Hindu temples by certain classes of Hindus who by custom or usage are excluded from such entry and worship (The Madras Temple Entry Authorization and Indemnity Bill), moved by Rajagopalachari in August 1939.

The bills were intended to accomplish socio-religious reforms in order to gain support from 'untouchables'. Nevertheless, at the same time, they had to avoid the antipathy and criticism of caste Hindus, and therefore presented compromises to the latter. The bills relating to temple entry provisioned that whether or not a temple would be opened to 'untouchables' would be decided by a referendum of those who had the right to enter the temples at that time, that is, caste Hindus only. In other words, the bills did not unconditionally guarantee the right of temple entry to 'untouchables', but gave the right of deciding this issue to caste Hindus. Rajagopalachari's determination to achieve Hindu unity was so inflexible that the bills were predetermined to have a moderate character, which he believed would help avert a split between caste Hindus and 'untouchables'.

These bills were also given the role of vindicating and defending Hinduism against the critique of the Non-Brahmin Movement, and of the Self-Respect Movement in particular. Rajagopalachari maintained that Hinduism was basically and originally tolerant and that untouchability was a later accretion—an exception—and that the liberal elements in the community would themselves definitely abolish such a custom.

Rajagopalachari's announcement that Hindi should be a compulsory subject in schools was perceived as an insult to the non-Brahmins' pride as Dravidians/Tamilians. EVR and other Self-Respect Movement members organized marches and massive anti-Hindi conferences. In order to deliberate on a systematic protest plan, a supervisory committee headed by EVR decided that a volunteer corps of protesters be formed to take out processions throughout the province and that parentsbe asked not to send their children to schools teaching Hindi. Anti-Hindi songs were composed and sung at public meetings and processions.

The imposition of Hindi was opposed not only because it was an alien language but also because it was quite close to Sanskrit. In exhorting people to learn Hindi, the Congress leaders themselves suggested that its affinity with Sanskrit would help in accessing Hindu religious texts (Geetha and Rajadurai 1998: 488; Pandian 2007: 221).

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[29] The bills relating to temple entry were legitimised through the complicated discourse of secularism, in part because reforms of religious customs established in temples on the government's initiative infringed on Clause 42 of the Hindu Religious Endowment Act enacted by the Justice Party. For details, see Shiga 2011.

[30] The first and second bills were introduced in the Assembly by M. C. Rajah, but were actually drafted by Rajagopalachari (*MLAD* 1938 vol. 6: 1171; vol. 7: 207).

The Congress-led government took punitive measures against the anti-Hindi agitators. More than 800 people were arrested, and an 'untouchable' youth died in January1939 while serving his sentence. The funeral became a stage of protest against the Congress ministry.[31] In the following month, another man, a Nadar, died. EVR was arrested in early December 1938 and sentenced to three years in prison.[32]

The anti-Hindi movement saw the Justice Party and the Self-Respecters unite under the banner of an anti-Hindi alliance. EVR was elected president of the Justice Party at its conference in December 1938, even while he was in jail. His presidential address was sent from prison to be read out at the conference, and his demand 'Tamil Nadu for the Tamilians' was adopted as one of the programmes. Anti-Hindi agitations were staged all over Tamil Nadu and their vehemence forced Rajagopalachari to withdraw his language policy.

8.1.1.5 *Dravida/Tamil Nationalism and the Partition*

In 1939, EVR organized the Dravida Nadu Conference demanding a separate and independent 'Dravida Nadu'. The demand was reiterated the following year in response to the Lahore Resolution, which demanded an independent Pakistan and was passed by the Muslim League. Under the leadership of EVR, the Justice Party was reorganized in 1944 as the Dravida Kazhagam. Its object was proclaimed to be the achievement of a sovereign independent Dravidian Republic, which would be a federal union of the four units corresponding to the linguistic divisions: Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam (Hardgrave 1965: 27–8).

The basic purpose of the movement demanding a separate state was that the Dravidians/non-Brahmins be liberated from oppression by the Aryans/Brahmins who were racially and culturally distinct from them. 'Dravidians' and 'non-Brahmins' were interchangeable terms both of which indicated 'the depressed' in the discourses of the Non-Brahmin Movement. The demand for a separate Dravida Nadu therefore was neither simple cultural nationalism nor regionalism.

However, EVR's struggle for Dravida Nadu could not attract support outside the Tamil-speaking area. The Non-Brahmin Movement had originally been inspired by the Tamil Renaissance and hence had succeeded in enlisting the cooperation of non-Brahmin castes under the banner of such a 'negative' identity as *non*-Brahmin. But, at the same time, it had awakened a sense of estrangement among non-Tamil speakers. Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam had been much influenced by Sanskrit. These languages, unlike Tamil, did not produce classical literatures that could be traced back to an era. Non-Tamil speakers did not think that their culture was independent of 'Aryan' influence, and therefore were not so enthusiastic about claiming Dravidian status. The Self-Respect Movement, which targeted the depressed mass population and spoke to them directly in Tamil, was inevitably concentrated almost entirely in the Tamil districts. When it launched its anti-Hindi campaign, the movement conveyed an impression in the minds of the non-Tamils that it transformed into the linguistic nationalism of Tamil-speakers and inevitably fell out of favour with Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam speakers.

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[31] *The Fortnightly Report*, Government of Madras, the second half of January, and the first half of February 1939.

[32] His sentence was reduced and he was released in May 1939.

The 15th of August 1947 witnessed the independence of India and Pakistan, but not of Dravidasthan. However, this should not be considered as the failure of the Non-Brahmin Movement. 'Non-Brahmin' was a multiple identity interchangeable with Dravidian, the poor, labourer, and any other 'oppressed' existence, and was not fixed to any particular caste, class, language, or region. The Non-Brahmin Movement, through this diversity, differentiated itself from a simple caste movement, linguistic nationalism, and regionalism, and made a strong impact on the Congress by vociferously protesting against the 'mainstream' of Brahminical–Hindu and Hindi Nationalism.

8.1.2 The Women's Movement in Pre-Independence South India

PARVATHI MENON

Historically, the women's movement in India emerged as an inextricable part of the freedom struggle. Its incubation within the larger movement for political, economic, and social emancipation of the Indian people as a whole, and its presence as one channel in the broad stream of anti-colonial forces shaped priorities and demands, won allies, and saw it develop across classes, castes, and regional boundaries. This aspect of its origins gave the Indian women's movement two of its important characteristics. The first was the broad and pan-Indian character both before and after Independence, where regional movements around women's status and identity found place within a national framework of struggle and demands. There were, of course, strong women leaders who made their presence felt through their work at the regional level but, and without exception, these local struggles and interventions by women found resonance and support at the broader national level. The leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and his mobilization of women into mass political campaigns was undoubtedly an important factor in the manner in which the women's movement, especially from within the middle class, grew within the nationalist fold. However, there were equally strong mobilizations by women from within the Left that drew working class, peasant, and tribal women into the struggle for freedom and women's rights.

The second characteristic of the Indian women's movement, acquired by it because of the specific circumstances of its birth, was the overall consciousness that informed the movement, and indeed continues to inform it. Because of its political origins, it grew first in relation to women's role and status under colonialism, and secondly, in relation to her place in and within the Indian familial and social structure. It did not grow solely in opposition to men as a separate category. The movement thus has 'a consciousness of women in relation to the world, not only to men' (Karat 2005: 3).

The woman's question began to be examined in a modern way in the nineteenth century as a consequence of the changes set in motion by the British conquest of India. On the one hand, the economic subjugation of India by a predatory colonialism had resulted in an impoverishment of the vast majority of Indians, while on the other, it also hardened social attitudes towards women of an already conservative society bound by the rules of religion and caste. Practices like child marriage, female infanticide, polygamy, *sati*, sale of daughters, and so on were strengthened during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

For the nineteenth century social reform movement that began in Bengal and subsequently spread to other centres of the country, the injustices that women faced was a central concern of its agenda. Inspired by humanist rationalist ideas, reformers like Raja Rammohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Dayanand Saraswati, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Virasalingam Pantulu, and R. Venkata Ratnam Naidu led movements for women's education and fought for the eradication of the cruel feudal legacies that oppressed women. The first major legislative victory for the social reform movement was the Sati Abolition Act in 1829. Before that, two regulations were passed—in 1795 and 1804—that made illegal the practice of female infanticide. The Hindu Widow Remarriage Act that allowed widows to remarry was passed in 1856. These legal milestones, though important victories on the long road to women's equality, did not materially alter the condition of women in the short term, although they did set the context for intensifying the campaigns for women's rights, most notably the right to education.

In south India, a major reformer was K. Virasalingam Pantulu (1848–1919) from Rajahmundry in the Madras Presidency. In his journal, *Viveka Vardhani*, he campaigned for women's education and widow remarriage, started a girl's school in 1874 and in 1878 set up the Society for Social Reform. Virasalingam presided over the first widow remarriage in Rajahmundry in 1881 and in 1891 formed the Widow Remarriage Association (Forbes 1998: 25).

By the latter half of the nineteenth century, reform efforts had mushroomed all over India, most notably in the field of women's education and legal rights. Though most of the early social reformers were male, women from the educated strata also emerged as leading fighters for women's emancipation. 'These "new women" as they were called, were part of a modernising movement ... for greater equality between men and women' (Forbes 1998: 28). Pandita Rambai (1858–82), Sarala Devi Chaudhurani, Swarnakumari Devi, and from south India, Annie Jagannathan and Rukmabai, were from amongst them. (Mukherjee 1989: 40)

In Madras, Sister Subbalakshmi (1886–1969) established a school for young Brahmin widows. She herself was a child widow and the first Hindu widow in Madras to complete a BA. Braving ostracism and harassment, her cause was strengthened when she was joined by Miss Christina Lynch, an Irish feminist who was appointed inspector of female education in Coimbatore. With over 22,000 widows between the ages of 5 and 15 in Madras alone, she and Subbalakshmi set up the Sarada Ladies Union in 1912 as a sort of club to help the cause of education for widows (Forbes 1998: 57–60).

In 1917, Margaret Cousins in Madras, an Irish feminist and follower of Annie Besant, founded with Dorothy Jinarajadasa the Women's Indian Association (WIA), the first modern organization of women. Its journal was called *Stree Dharma*, and its honorary secretaries were Ammu Swaminadhan and S. Ambujammal. In five years, there were 43 branches and 2,300 members in the WIA. The organization was to lead a deputation of women, with Sarojini Naidu at the helm, to Edwin Montagu, Secretary of State for India, who was touring the country in 1919 to formulate political reforms. The delegation demanded the franchise for women and their right to participate in politics (*WI* 1980: 16).

The first mass Indian women's organization to come into being was the All-India Women's Conference (AIWC) that met in Poona in January 1927 under the initiative of Margaret Cousins and other women belonging to the WIA. It began publishing its quarterly journal, *Roshni*, in 1941. From demands for education and social reform, the organization moved to more pressing political demands.

Kamala Devi Chattopadhyay has written eloquently on the participation of women in the great political campaigns of the early 1930s in response to the call of Gandhi for women to join the Salt Satyagraha. 'Unlettered, untrained, unprepared, they assumed new duties with unexpected courage. Following the violation of the Salt Act came effective attacks on the Forest Laws and other obnoxious taxes and regulations' (*WI* 1980: 18).

In an interview with this author, the freedom fighter and leader of the Rani Lakshmi brigade of the Indian National Army, 'Captain' Lakshmi Sahgal (1916–2012), recalled how her mother, Ammu Swaminadhan, a Madras socialite-turned-ardent Congresswoman, made a bonfire of the family's foreign clothes in solidarity with Gandhi's call for the boycott of foreign goods (Menon 2004: 43).

In the same interview, Lakshmi Sahgal underlined the point that a distinctive feature of the freedom movement in south India was the unity between the campaigns for political freedom and the demands of the social reform movement. Campaigns for temple entry for Dalits and against child marriage gained considerable momentum in the 1920s. There was a surprisingly militant section of orthodox Hindu women willing to defend child marriage on public platforms, according to Sahgal, who spoke of how the women in her own family were divided on the issue. In 1931–2, Lakshmi herself organized meetings and strikes amongst students against the arrest in Lahore of Bhagat Singh, the leader of the Hindustan Republican Socialist Association who had been convicted for the murder of Assistant Superintendent of Police John Saunders, and took collections to fund his trial (Menon 2004: 45).

S. Ambujammal joined the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920, and formed the Women's Swadeshi League in Madras. Krishnabai Rau organized the Desh Sevikas along with her sister Indirabai Rau. They went campaigning door-to-door for Swadeshi, organized exhibitions, sold *khaddar* and joined men in picketing (Forbes 1998: 144–5).

Rukmani Lakshmipathy (1891–1951) accompanied C. Rajagopalachari on the Vedaranyam Salt March and was the first political prisoner in Vellore Women's Jail (Forbes 1998: 146).

Muthulakshmi Reddy (1886–1968) holds a special place in the annals of the history of the women's movement in the pre-independence period. Daughter of a Brahmin father and a woman who belonged to the *dēvadāsī* community (women who were 'offered' to a temple as singers and dancers, and were invariably dependent on male benefactors), Muthulakshmi's early education was encouraged by the enlightened Maharajah of Pudukottah. She joined the Madras Medical College, graduating in 1912 and became a house surgeon in the Government Hospital for Women and Children in Madras. Nominated to the Madras Legislative Council in 1926, Dr Reddy campaigned vigorously for women's rights, most notably for the abolition of the *dēvadāsī* system (Forbes 1998: 103–5).

Kanak Mukherjee notes, in her book on the women's movement in India that by the second and third decade of the twentieth century, 'the participation of women [in the freedom struggle] was remarkable (Mukherjee 1989: 56).

A new element in the national movement that offered a radical new perspective for women organizers was the emergence of the Left by the late 1920s and 1930s. The message of anti-colonialism and emancipation from all forms of oppression was now taken to new sections—the peasantry and working class, but also large sections of the middle classes who were drawn intellectually to the Left. Till the early 1940s, the AIWC was the only mass women's organization but, as Mukherjee says, it represented upper-crust women social workers under the Congress. 'Needless to say, this organisation did not reach the lower strata of women. Moreover, opinion within the National Congress was divided between compromise and no-compromise [with the British]. And both the AIWC and most of the women branches of the Congress sided with the soft-liners or the compromising trend of the Congress led by Gandhi' (Mukherjee 1989: 60).

In the 1940s and in the background of World War II, mass women's organizations drawn from the peasantry, working class, and middle classes were formed under the aegis of the Communist Party. In the initial stages, their task was to fight the twin threats of fascism and imperialism, and to save people from starvation in the famines that ravaged parts of the country, most notably in Bengal. The largest of them was the Mahila Atma Raksha Samity (Women's Self-Defence Organisation) in Bengal. The Parel Mahila Sangh, a predominantly working class women's organization was formed in Bombay in 1943. Women became active in the agrarian movements of Tebhaga, Telangana, and Punnapra Vayalar, and in the post-war phase of the freedom movement, in the struggles in support of the Royal Indian Navy Mutiny and the popular movements in the princely states (Mukherjee 1989: 64–7).[33]

In south India, from among the many Left women leaders who took part in the freedom movement, the names of Mallu Swarajyam (b. 1931) and Moturu Udayam (1921–2002) from Andhra Pradesh, Pappa Umanath (1931–2010) from Tamil Nadu, and Susheela Gopalan (1930–2001) from Kerala, stand out as representatives of their time and politics. All of them came into the freedom struggle as young girls, joined the Left movement, and rose to become important leaders.

Mallu Swarajyam became a member of the Andhra Mahila Sabha (AMS), the women's wing of the Andhra Mahasabha, in 1942. The AMS took up the struggle against the many forms of *vetti* (forced unpaid labour from Dalit women). In 1946, when she was just 15, Swarajyam became a member of the Communist Party that was leading the Telangana peasants in their struggle against the Nizam's regime that was the buttress of oppressive feudal landlordism. At its peak, the movement touched the lives of the peasantry in 3000 villages. In the 12 to 18 months of *gram raj* (village/people's governance) established by the party, the despised landlords were driven away, and almost a million acres of confiscated land distributed to the landless. Alongside the economic changes, new and progressive social regulations and cultural practices were introduced. Swarajyam trained hundreds of girls as volunteers to the *dalams* or people's army units, and in defending the villages from attacks by landlord armies. She became famous under the name of Rajakka, and was one of the most wanted Communist leaders at the time, with the Nizam's government announcing a bounty of Rs 10,000 for her capture (Menon 2004: 55–67).

Moturu Udayam was another leader of the women's movement in Andhra Pradesh in the pre-independence struggle. She was a charismatic agitator, campaign organizer, motivator and fund-raiser, with a flair for acting and singing, which she used effectively in her campaigns. She joined the Communist Party in

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[33] This phase of the women's movement in India, especially the role of women from the Left, is better documented than it used to be. Chakravarty 1980 was one of the earliest assessments of the role of communists in the women's movement in India.

Guntur district, and used *burrakatha* (folk narrative in song) to mobilize women into squads that fought against wartime black marketeering and profiteering (Menon 2004: 91–5).

In Tamil Nadu, Pappa Umanath was a major figure in the pre-and post-Independence women's movement. She was brought into the struggle by K. P. Janaki Ammal, the first woman in south India to have been arrested (in 1939) by the British for anti-war propaganda, and an organizer who led a peasant movement in Thuvariman village where she organized tenants to till the land in defiance of eviction orders. Pappa's baptism in trade unionism took place in Ponmalai (Golden Rock settlement) in Trichi in July 1946 when the workers of the Golden Rock Railway Workshop went on strike, a strike that was to spread to other workshops in south India. She became part of the Ponmalai Women's Association. Pappa joined the Communist Party in 1945, at the age of 15 (Menon 2004: 106–11).

In Kerala, Susheela Gopalan emerged as a mass leader of the Left movement in the pre-Independence period. As a student she was drawn into the popular movement against the Maharaja of Travancore and the repressive regime of his Diwan, Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer. She married the legendary communist leader A. K. Gopalan, and continued her involvement in Left politics and the women's movement from within and outside the legislature in the post-Independence period, till her untimely death in 2002 (Menon 2004: 120–4).

The important role played by E. V. Ramaswami Naicker in raising the women's issue in a radical framework in south India will be discussed in section 8.2.4.

There are many assessments of the historical experience of the pre-Independence women's movement. It gave the movement the important legacy of a militant fighting tradition. There is little doubt that the central demand for a free India with basic democratic and secular structures often obscured issues that women faced within the home and workplace, but these were precisely the issues that women's organizations were to include in their agenda in the post-Independence period.

8.1.3 The South Indian Economy before Independence

HARUKA YANAGISAWA

Like western India, the south too witnessed an expansion of modern cotton mills with the first such mill in the region being established in 1874 by a Parsi company from Bombay. Another mill followed, but they were not very successful, unlike the Buckingham Mill, set up in 1876 by Binnys, and the Carnatic Mill, founded soon after. Harveys and Stanes built more mills in Madurai, Coimbatore, and other places. The first reasonably successful mill in the Tamil region that was set up with Indian capital was one in Coimbatore by a Nattukottai Chettiar.

Following World War I, the cotton mills of south India expanded and became increasingly important. One began to see successful cotton spinning mills in the Andhra as well as in the Tamil regions. The Nattukottai Chettiars, who had accumulated capital through the southeast Asian trade, invested in these mills. From the 1920s, members of the Kammavar Naidu agricultural community in the Coimbatore district also began setting up cotton mills. In the 1930s, availability of electricity from a power station built in the Nilgiri Valley led to a boom in the mills around Coimbatore, which peaked between 1932 and 1935. By 1941, there were more than fifty mills in Tamil Nadu (Baker 1984: 339–55).

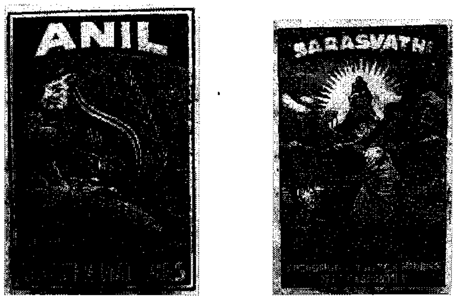
A feature of modern cotton mills in the south was the overwhelming centrality of the spinning industry. As in the cotton mills in western India, the cotton yarn produced in the southern mills was at first supplied to handloom weavers within the country, and to China. In the 1910s, however, Indian yarn was dislodged from the Chinese market by the developing Japanese cotton industry. The mills in Bombay, after they lost their export market, rapidly increased the consumption of yarn to produce woven cloth, but the consumption ratio for yarn used in the manufacture of cloth in the south Indian cotton mills showed little increase. Though tariff protection for woven cloth was put in place in the 1930s, the volume of factory-made cloth hardly increased. This was characteristic of the southern cotton mills that saw the bulk of their products being consumed by handloom weavers, and it remained unchanged in the 1920s and 1930s (Bhogendranath 1957: Part I).

How did the south Indian mills develop in spite of the loss of the overseas market, and without increasing cloth production? As we have already seen, handloom production in the south had not declined even at the beginning of the twentieth century and had in fact expanded during the first half of the century. This was a time when weavers had begun to make high-quality, non-cotton items with a high yarn count, and so on. The southern cotton mills responded to such changes in the handloom industry by increasing the proportion of the fine yarn produced. Large spinning mills in the Tamil region increased the proportion spun from long staple raw cotton. At the beginning of the 1920s, about one-third of the cotton used by mills in the Madras Presidency was the long-staple Cambodian variety, but a decade later the mills were using more than two-thirds. Using long-staple cotton allowed for fine thread with a high yarn count. Although almost 90 per cent of the thread spun in mills at the end of the nineteenth century was coarse, with a yarn count of below twenty, by the beginning of the 1920s, coarse thread had fallen to just below 50 per cent. Thus the south Indian mills developed during this period by strengthening their complementary relationship with weavers.

Before the 1930s, most of the ginned output in the cotton-producing districts of the Tamil region was sent to Bombay or exported. However, with the proportion of cotton consumed in the Madras Presidency growing from one-third in the 1920s to two-thirds by the end of the 1930s, long-staple cotton in particular began to be used mostly by mills in the Madras Presidency. In the 1920s and 1930s, the strengthening complementary relationship among the cultivators, the spinning mills, and the handloom weavers fostered further development of the industry.

A number of non-cotton industries also developed around this time. Parrys were among those who unsuccessfully experimented with refining white sugar, but when sugar imports were curtailed during World War I and the tax on sugar rose, the Nattukottai Chettiars embarked on setting up sugar mills. In 1931–2, the government considerably raised taxes on sugar, after which there was a marked increase in investment in mills. Nattukottai Chettiars and Naidus played an important role here. Nadar merchants who had dealt in cotton in southern Tamil Nadu reacted to the imposition of taxes on matches in the 1930s by producing matches (see Figure 8.2). Most were small factories, but by the 1960s there were 800 of them in Sivakasi (Baker 1984: 372–9).

Other industries that developed in south India from the 1920s included rice mills, oil mills, cotton ginning mills, and still smaller scale workshops and factories producing such things as *bidis* (Indian cigarettes). Many of



a b

Figure 8.2 Match Labels Produced in South India in the 1920/30s: (a) Anil and (b) Sarasvathi
Source: Courtesy of Takashi Oishi.

these industries were located in rural areas and their goods were produced mainly for the domestic market.

Rice mills came up in south India from the beginning of the twentieth century, with rice being exported to Sri Lanka and other places. Though exports dwindled by the end of the 1920s, the number of mills continued to increase. This was because consumption among the lower classes in the south had grown greatly from the end of the nineteenth century. They preferred the 'parboiled' kind, which was harvested rice that had been steamed in its husk, then dried, and with the husk removed before eating. The mills catered thus to the increased needs of the urban labouring classes, and of the lower classes in the villages.

Small oil mills also reflected changes in patterns of consumption, with the number in Madras state growing from 34 in 1931 to 238 in 1938. The district of South Arcot, famous for its production of groundnuts, was an important oil mill centre. Groundnut cultivation grew rapidly in south India from the end of the nineteenth century, with most of it being exported to France and other European countries. When the export of groundnuts was disrupted during World War I, domestic consumption increased greatly. Even after the war ended, a bulk of the groundnuts was used domestically for edible oil. Groundnut oil was cheaper than other oils like sesame, and the rise in its domestic consumption reflected the broadening of its use among the lower classes. The increase in *bidi* production likewise reflected increased consumption by them. The mushrooming growth of small factories and workshops in south India from the 1920s is closely linked with changing patterns of consumption among the lower classes such as agricultural labourers and tenant farmers (Yanagisawa 2010; Baker 1984: 373).

Most of the expanding south Indian small businesses were oriented to the domestic market, though there were some that made products intended for export. Typical of these was the leather industry. A large number of factories established in Madras and its environs were managed by Muslims who employed Dalits as labourers. The hides were brought in by rail and tanned. Business grew on the basis of demands from Europe, such as for leather boots for the British army. In 1931, there were 776 tanneries in Madras, employing close to 10,000 labourers (Roy 1999: Chapter 6). And the region that is now the state of Kerala, witnessed an expansion in the production of fibre and oil from the coconut palm.

What we have seen above is an overview of the cotton manufacturing industry and other small-scale industries in south India. If we exclude the handloom weavers, those engaged in these industries formed only a very small proportion of the population. Thus it is important to emphasize that even at the end of the colonial period, the south was overwhelmingly an agricultural region.

From 1880 to around 1920, agriculture in the Tamil region saw not only an increase in the area of land under cultivation but also increased yield per acre. This latter was supported by the development of intensive farming through the application of purchased fertilizers by farmers and a growth in the number of wells in dry areas (Yanagisawa 1996: 49–59, 289–92).

In the middle of the nineteenth century, there were large tracts of uncultivated wasteland used as pasture and from where green manure (leaves, grass) and fodder were gathered. By the end of the century, such land was being reclaimed and the common land in villages was rapidly decreasing. As a result, there was a shortage of green manure, causing prices of both manure and fodder to rise. People began purchasing wild indigo and other plants brought from the forests, and in their own fields they began cultivating crops that could be used for manure. Together with an increased investment in fertilizer, there was also a considerable growth in the number of wells, and greater numbers of crops were raised each year. In 1891–2, the area of dry land watered by wells in the Tamil districts was 0.785 million acres, and in 1922–3 it had grown to 1.206 million acres. Despite the rapid reduction in the area of common land in villages, the increased application of fertilizer, either purchased from outside or produced on the farm, as well as the increased frequency of planting, succeeded in checking any deterioration in land productivity, and actually even increased it in many areas.

This period of agricultural expansion came to an end around 1920, and from then until around 1950 agriculture stagnated and declined, both in terms of extent and yield. A major factor in this was the influence of the global agricultural slump after 1920 and a fall in prices of agricultural products (Figure 8.3).

The fall in prices affected agriculture greatly. A government publication of 1937 pointed out that falling prices of farm produce checked the increase in fertilizer use.[34] Further, a 1938 survey of south Indian villages stated that falling prices for village products had had a severe effect

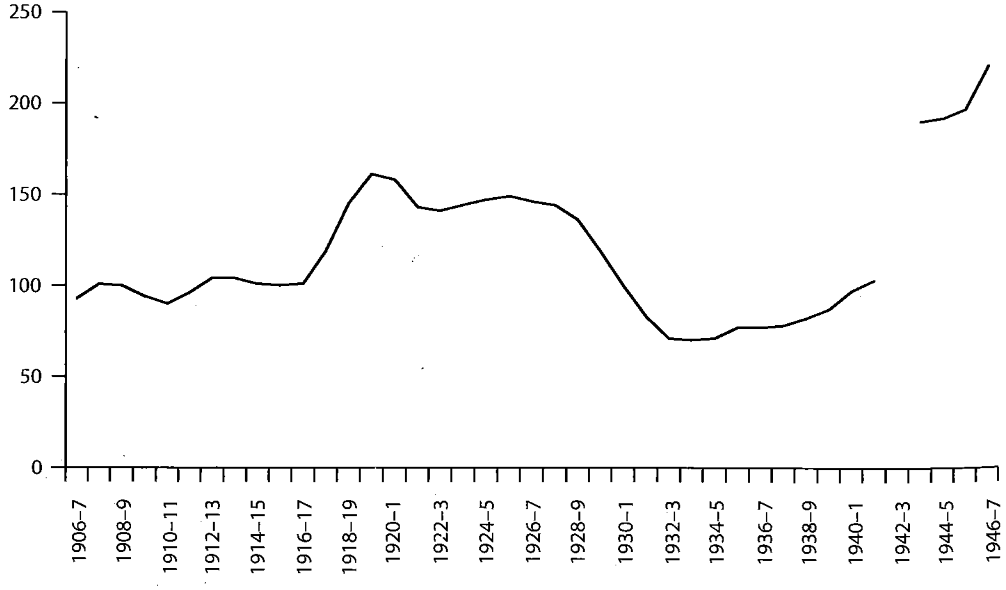


Figure 8.3 Index Number of Three-Year Average of Prices of Rice in the Madras Presidency (1915–16 = 100)
Source: *Season and Crop Reports of the Madras Presidency*, various years.
Note: For 1941–2 and 1943–4, two-year average figures are used.

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[34] K. Ramiah, *Rice in Madras: A Popular Handbook*, Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1937, pp. 120, 124.

on farmers, that they had completely stopped using chemical fertilizers and were generally content to use fertilizer randomly as they gathered it and were loathe to buying even essential cattle manure from outside.[35] The global slump in prices of agricultural products in the 1930s thus reduced fertilizer consumption by farmers. Also, excavation of wells that had expanded over many areas in the various districts of Tamil Nadu until 1920 came to a halt, and remained in a state of virtual stagnation until around 1950.[36] Consequently, after 1920, yield per acre stayed more or less the same, or even fell.

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[35] P. J. Thomas and K. C. Ramakrishnan (eds), *Some South Indian Villages: A Resurvey*, University of Madras, Madras, 1940, p. 84.

[36] Government of Madras, *Season and Crop Reports* for various years.

8.1.4 The *Dēvadāsī* Issue

TAKAKO INOUE

Dēvadāsī (maiden of god) is a term given to a woman who, according to religious tradition is dedicated to a Hindu temple. Regarded as a wife of the immortal, her role was to take part in auspicious activities, and to dance and sing while men played musical instruments and directed the performance. *Dēvadāsīs* can be traced back to the seventh and eighth centuries, and by the tenth or eleventh century in south India were fairly well institutionalized.[37] Also called nautch (dancing) girls in the colonial period, their customs varied depending on localities and castes. They were gradually stigmatized as prostitutes, as the only practice they had in common was sexual relationship with men without the formality of marriage.

Separated from its religious grounds, the *dēvadāsī* institution (or custom) emerged as an issue in the mid-nineteenth century in the context of suppression of prostitution and protection of women and minors. The Anti-Nautch Movement commenced in Madras Presidency in 1892, when westernized elite Hindu nationalists, together with Christian missionaries, asserted that nautch girls were prostitutes, the practice of inviting them was a social evil not authorized by religion and that the institution should be purged so as to purify social life. At first, the Government was reluctant to take up the issue because of its policy of non-intervention in matters of religion and custom, and also due to the delicacy of a question hovering between religion and social reform.

It was the Mysore Government that first circulated an order that the *dēvadāsī inam*—tax-free land granted to *dēvadāsīs* for their service in temples—be confirmed as permanent property by imposing the payment of quit-rent as compensation for prohibiting them from performing temple services. From the 1910s to the 1920s, the legislature took up for discussion the issue of prostitution and protection of women and minors.[38] Some pressed for the abolition of the *dēvadāsī* institution, asserting that *dēvadāsīs* were mere prostitutes in religious guise, while others maintained it was unreasonable to hold only *dēvadāsīs* to account because prostitution was also practised outside temples. Both parties, however, agreed that dissociating prostitution from religion would protect the latter. Thus the perception of *dēvadāsīs* as prostitutes was practically established during the debates.

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[37] The famous inscription at the Bṛhadīśvara temple in Thanjavur constructed by Rājarāja I (985–1016) listed 400 names of *devadāsīs* in service there.

[38] The bills were introduced in the Legislative Council in 1912. The issue was again taken up in Parliament between 1922 and 1927.

The campaign against *dēvadāsī* was most active in Madras Presidency, where S. Muttulakshmi Reddi (MR, 1886–1968), a doctor-cum-social reformer, was the leading figure. Nominated the first woman legislator of the Madras Legislative Council,[39] MR moved the resolution to undertake legislation for the prevention of dedication of girls to temples, which was adopted in 1927. Emphasizing the virtue of continence, the value of motherhood, and the role of citizens, MR urged women to play the role of mother as she regarded *dēvadāsīs* as against ideal womanhood and as victims of religion and custom.[40] Thus, MR shared the opinion with Westernized elite nationalists of the dichotomous character of women, as either a chaste mother or a degraded prostitute. MR introduced a bill to amend the Madras Hindu Religious Endowment Act (the Devadāsī Bill), which was laid down as 'Enfranchisement or freeing of lands etc. held by a *dēvadāsī* on condition of service in a temples'. This bill was passed into law in 1929 and she introduced another bill in 1930 to prevent dedication of girls to temples. The latter took a long time to be accepted and the Madras Devadāsīs (Prevention of Dedication) Bill was finally passed into law in 1947.

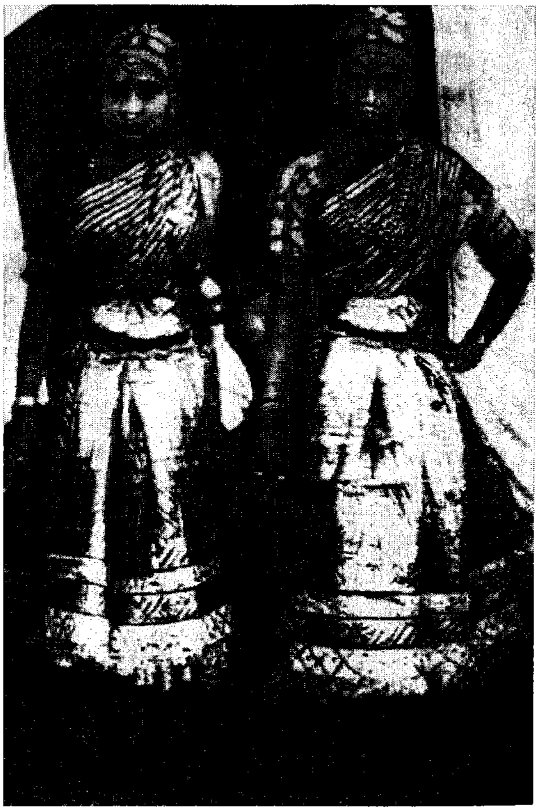

Figure 8.4 Kalyani Daughters, the First *Dēvadāsīs* Who Performed at the Music Academy, Madras
Source: Courtesy of Sruti.

In the 1930s, another problem arose concerning the *dēvadāsī* issue when some people defended nautch girls as artists. A crucial controversy on 'Art and Social Reform' between MR and E. Krishna Iyer (EKI, 1897–1968),[41] Secretary of the Music Academy, Madras, began in 1932, when MR sent angry letters to newspapers criticizing those who held nautch parties. Her letters drew a response from EKI, saying that nautch should not be used for immoral purposes but should be preserved as art (*The Hindu*, 2, 7, 10, 14, 19 December 1932) (see Figure 8.4). Soon after this controversy, the Music Academy, Madras, adopted a resolution to take steps to preserve and promote the *dēvadāsī* dance by renaming it as Bharatanāṭyam. Women of 'respectable' classes were considered the most qualified for uplifting the status of dance. Giving her debut recital in 1936, Rukmini Devi (1904–86) became the first Brahmin woman dancer. Thereafter, Bharatanāṭyam gradually became dissociated from the old community that had practised nautch dancing.

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[39] Born in a middle class family in Pudukkottai, MR received the highest education along with boys. She took an active part in the women's uplift movement as a member of the Women's Indian Association and the All-India Women's Conference (Reddi 1930 and 1964).

[40] Her speech in the Madras Legislative Council was titled 'Why Should the Devadāsī Institution in the Hindu Temples Be Abolished' (Reddi 1964: 138–49).

[41] EKI was a lawyer by profession, a member of the Indian National Congress, and an actor-cum-dancer. He introduced a dance recital by the Kalyani Daughters in a programme of the annual conference held at the Music Academy in 1931 (*JMAM*, 1931, vol. II, no. 1, p. 78).

With the advent of the Anti-Nautch Movement, *dēvadāsī* communities founded caste associations to ameliorate their social status. The Sengunthar (weavers) Mahajana Sangam founded in Coimbatore in 1913 by male members of this caste is the earliest example. They adopted a resolution supporting the Devadāsī Bill. Prompted by male members, *dēvadāsīs* hailing from this caste founded the Coimbatore Manimehalai Sangam. The Isai Vellalars (music Vellalas), a caste of music and dance specialists of temple rituals in the Tamil region also began similar activities in the 1920s. Both associations of the male members had a perceptual framework similar to that of elite nationalists: *dēvadāsī*–prostitution–social evil–taint to caste. In the Andhra region, both male and female *kalavantulus* (artists) founded associations and frequently held conferences to encourage members to stop dedication, to conduct marriages, save girls, and to help each other, besides supporting the Devadāsī Bill.[42]

The defects of the Devadāsī Act of 1929 soon became clear when *kalavantulu* associations sent petitions to amend it, stating that the quit-rent was very high, the temple authorities were reluctant to enfranchise *dēvadāsī inams*, and the Act was applicable only to *inams* held by women but not by men or in joint ownership. The associations requested enfranchisement of all the lands granted for *dēvadāsī* service in temples, which was performed by a party consisting of both men and women, irrespective of the names of *inamdars*. MR, however, never took up their petition seriously since her intention was to propagate her notion of ideal womanhood and to urge *dēvadāsīs* to identify themselves as prostitutes and undertake self-reform.

It was difficult for *dēvadāsīs* in various places to unite themselves simply by urging self-reform. To stop their temple services implied economic loss caused by giving up the remuneration consisting of lands granted, an assignment of land revenue or both, for service to be performed by a *dēvadāsī* in a temple. *Kalavantulu* associations expected that the Devadāsī Bill would be effective in solving the economic problem that they would inevitably face in the process of self-reform. On the other hand, quite a few *dēvadāsī* organizations supported the preservation of this institution. The Madras Devadāsī Association, founded in 1927 and comprising distinguished *dēvadāsī* artists who cooperated with EKI and his sympathizers, was one such. Bangalore Nagaratnammal (1878–1952), a famous vocalist, was the leader of the association and Veena Dhanammal (1868–1938) and her family were descendants of dancers and musicians attached to the Thanjavur palace. They stated that *dēvadāsīs* were not prostitutes but holy artistes who could maintain the sanctity of dance (*Sruti*, 1986/87 issue 27/28: 19). Thus, the views of the *kalavantulu* associations and those of the Madras Devadāsī Association were markedly different based on what identity they intended to reconstruct and adhere to. MR, in seeking to legitimate her stance, often projected the former and condemned the latter set of opinions.

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[42] From the political point of view, caste associations in the Tamil region were associated more with the Dravidian Movement, while the *kalavantulu* of the Andhra region were associated more with the freedom struggle led by the Congress at the national level.

It is clear that in the *dēvadāsī* issue various aspects such as religious sanctity, the taint of prostitution and preservation of fine art were all mixed up. Based on their point of view, people defended, criticized, or boycotted *devadāsīs*. As for the latter, despite differences among themselves, they were unanimous in their resolve to remove the stigma of prostitution. As things turned out, the campaign by the elites, interested in propagating moral value, was to prevail, and it was not only oblivious of the economic hardships that it entailed for the *devadāsīs* but also ended up marginalizing them more severely than before.

In the course of time, even as other communities were beginning to showcase their heritage on stage, *dēvadāsīs* were expelled from temple services including their right to sing and dance.[43] As a result, the theme of dance changed from *sṛṅgāra* to *bhakti* emphasizing its religious attributes: setting the Natarāja statue on stage and worshipping it, including sacred hymns in their repertoires, avoiding erotic movements, choreographing the relationship between a Hindu deity and a devotee instead of a man and woman, and so on. Today, Bharatanāṭyam is one of the most prestigious traditional dances, and can be performed by anyone regardless of caste, creed, gender, nationality, or other such distinctions.

Thus, although both social reform and renaissance of a traditional art were realized, the depressed conditions of the *dēvadāsīs* did not improve.

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[43] Despite the legislative measure, the dedication custom that exclusively leads to prostitution still continues to be practised, mainly among Dalit communities in Karnataka. They suffer from poverty which, in turn leads them to prostitution (Shankar 1990; Tarachand 1992).

8.1.5 New Trends in Music

TAKAKO INOUE

After the fall of the Thanjavur Marathas, musicians and dancers who enjoyed the patronage of the Court were forced to move in search of new patrons. Some settled in Madras, a metropolitan city populated by the rising middle classes or colonial elites such as lawyers, administrators, and merchants. Others settled in princely states such as Mysore and Travancore or in smaller *zamindaris*/*samasthānamus*. As a result, the music and dance fostered in Thanjavur was disseminated throughout south India. Madras especially became a centre of the performing arts by the early twentieth century. Music associations, called *sabhās*, were established one after another by elite music lovers in the city. The *sabhās*, which became new patrons of Carnatic music, gave musicians opportunities for concerts, and supported their activities in general.

The purpose of establishing a *sabhā* was not only to patronize musicians but also to provide music education in the modern school system.[44] Standardization of musical practice and theory was regarded as primary for accomplishing this. The All-India Music Conference held in 1927 led to the establishment of the Music Academy, Madras, which played the most significant role in further development of Carnatic music, Bharatanāṭyam, and other classical performing arts. During the initial period of the Academy, a topic that frequently came up at its annual conferences was the *rāga lakshaṇa* (grammar of *rāga*), which aimed at standardizing a *rāga* whose pattern was interpreted differently by musicians and families. P. Sambamurthy (1901–73), who made a significant contribution to music education, collected and summarized various opinions submitted at the Academy's conferences. He prepared the curriculum for the University of Madras and published *South Indian Music* (Books I–VI, 1963–83), which a number of music schools and conservatories adopt as textbooks to this day.

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[44] Traditional performing arts such as music and dance were handed down from a *guru* to his/her disciples orally (*gurukula*/*guru–sisya parampara*).

The repertoire of Carnatic music is dominated by Telugu songs such as the *kriti*s of Tyagaraja. Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar (1881–48), a connoisseur and a patron of Carnatic music, and other Tamil writers like Kalki Krishnamurty (1899–54) and C. Rajagopalachari (1878–1972) made appeals for the popularization of Tamil songs. During the anti-Hindi agitation, in Tamil-speaking regions in the late 1930s, the Tamil Isai Iyakkam (Tamil Music Movement) developed as linguistic nationalism in music; the first Tamil Isai Conference was held in 1941, in which a number of resolutions were passed for propagating Tamil songs, and the Tamil Isai Sangam was established in 1943 for investigating and promoting the Tamil music tradition (Tamil Icaic Caṅkam

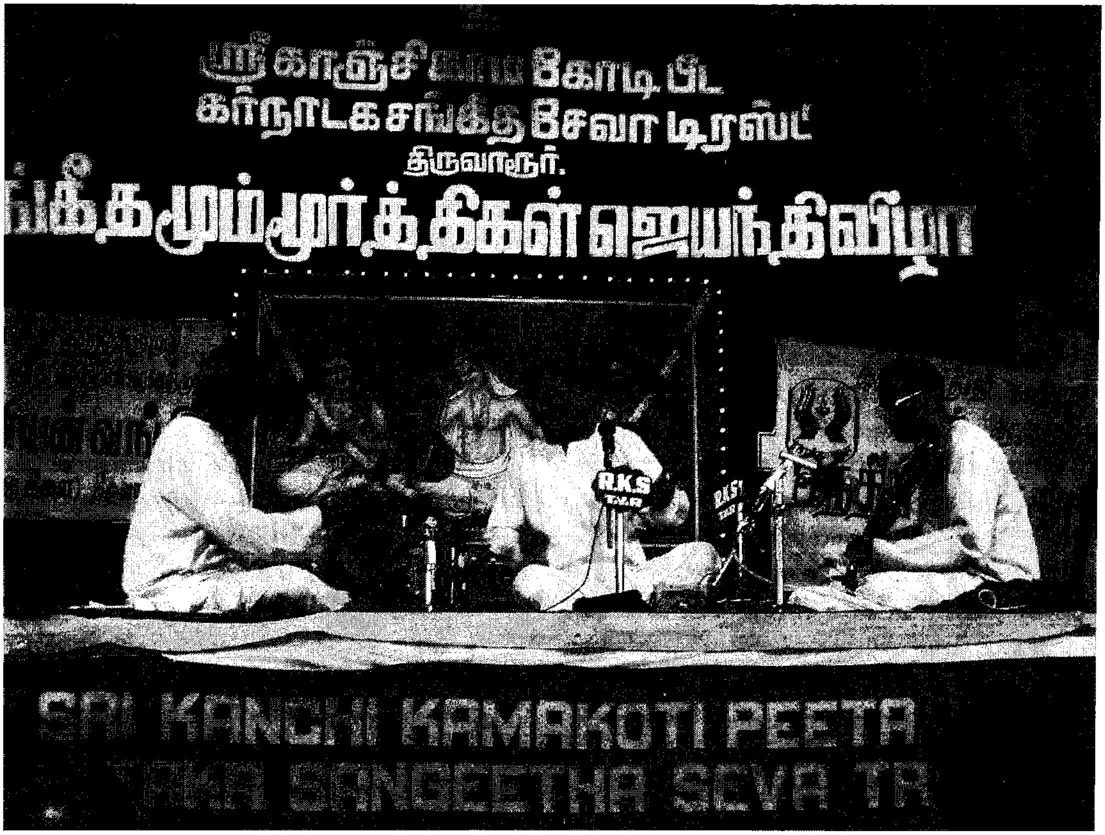
கர்நாடக சங்கீத சேவா டிரஸ்ட்
திருவாரூர்.
ங்கீத மும்மூர்த்திகள் ஜெயந்தி விழா
RKS
SRI KANCHI KAMAKOTI PEETA
SANGEETHA SEVA TR

Figure 8.5 Munmurti Jayanti Music Festival in Chennai
Source: Courtesy of Takako Inoue.

1967, 1992). However, musicians did not always have a sizeable repertoire of Tamil songs, so, while some musicians tried to add more of these in their concerts, for others the *kritis* of Tyagaraja continued to be the main repertoire.

Though it may have been born out of the Tamil-speakers' simple desire to listen to Tamil songs, the Tamil Isai Iyakkam somehow became linked to the larger political issues of the Dravidian movement and the growth of Tamil nationalism. This gave rise to a controversy over the language to be used for music in Tamil-speaking regions. The outcome of this would decide whether or not the Tamil Isai Iyakkam would succumb to linguistic chauvinism by eliminating the traditional repertoire of other languages like the *kritis* of Tyagaraja.

In the 1960s, the DMK came to power. Thereafter, both the DMK and the (AI)ADMK pushed forward the cultural policy based on Tamil nationalism, which intensified the controversy over music and language. There arose at the same time a voice proclaiming, 'art for art's sake', the typical ideology for the freedom of art, but it was not always possible for this voice to convince sectarians in the music field (see Figure 8.5).[45]

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[45] Subramanian says that the Tamil Isai Iyakkam failed to develop an original and viable framework to support the alternative tradition. As a result, 'the movement shifted the emphasis of its activities into the field of popular culture, cinema, and devotion, with local temples playing pre-recorded Tamil songs as part of the daily fare' (Subramanian 2006: 166–7).

8.2 INDEPENDENCE AND AFTER: POLITICS, SOCIETY, AND ECONOMY

8.2.1 The Language Issue and the Reorganization of States

KEIKO YAMADA

The history and culture of regional languages was rediscovered throughout India in the nineteenth century. In south India, it was more evident with the emergence of regionalism based on the four major Dravidian languages: Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam. The speakers of Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam, who 'discovered' themselves and were till then divided among several provinces and the princely states, launched movements for unification, namely the Andhra, Ekikarana, and Aikya Kerala movements, respectively. The Tamils, although undivided within the large Madras Presidency, nevertheless began the Dravidian movement, which developed into advocacy for a Dravida Nadu. Thus, even before the independence of India, linguistic regionalism in south India had already been a contentious issue. After Independence, the first ten years of nation-building between 1947 and 1956 saw the issue play a decisive role again and prompted the formation of two major policy directions: one was the official language policy and the other the reorganization of states, that is, federal restructuring. Generally, these two issues are discussed separately as if unrelated but, in reality, the fact that the official language policy was drafted first followed by the reorganization of states, as such decided the fate of linguistic states. Language and reorganization of states were not two separate problems but two sides of the same issue.

The question of an official language comes first. Throughout the process of drafting the Constitution, significant confusion existed among the Constituent Assembly members and reaching a consensus proved difficult. K. Santhanam and A. K. Ayyar, both from Madras, strongly opposed the demand that Hindi be the only national language. They criticized the 'Hindi Imperialism' of the United Province members. In particular, T. T. Krishnamachari referred to 'the elements in South India who want separation' (Constituent Assembly Debates, vii: 235), and warned that it was not the demand for Dravida Nadu but 'Hindi Imperialism' that would endanger India's integration. After various shows of stiff resistance, critical demands were included in the final draft that settled on the Munshi–Ayyangar formula. The capitulations were: (*a*) continuation of the use of English at federal level for at least fifteen years (Article 343), (*b*) addition of the Eighth Schedule, and (*c*) the use of 'the international form of Indian numerals', that is, Arabic numerals, and discontinuing the use of Devanagari numerals (Article 344). In short, although well-laid provisions were made for promoting Hindi as the only national language in future, they proved ineffective.

Regarding the Constitution, two other subjects which have not been recognized deserve attention. One is the seat allocation for each state in Parliament (the Fourth Schedule) in proportion to the size of its population. Interestingly, this democratic principle seems to have been accepted without much opposition. No one demanded that more seats be given to the 'non-Brahmin Dravidian' south. The other issue was the 'official language or languages of a state' (Article 345). This also did not cause noticeable controversy, but it was in fact problematic. At the time of the drafting of the Constitution, the 'states' were just those transferred from British India and erstwhile Princely States renamed as such after their annexation to India. Therefore, an overall reorganization of such a colonial legacy was expected from the new government. However, before the blueprint of the new states was prepared, the Constitution was announced, in which Article 345 stated: 'The Legislature of a State may by law adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the State or Hindi as the language or languages to be used for all or any of the official purpose of that State'. Two points are noteworthy here: first, a state's official language need not necessarily be a regional language of the majority of the inhabitants of the state, and Hindi could be its official language if the Legislative Assembly voted for it. This indicates that the government actually expected that state reorganization could possibly be based on a non-regional language basis and was ready for it. Second, if non-Hindi speakers dominated the Legislative Assembly, their tongue would naturally be the official language of the state. In this case, Hindi could be virtually and lawfully done away with by the use of the regional language inside the state and English outside it.

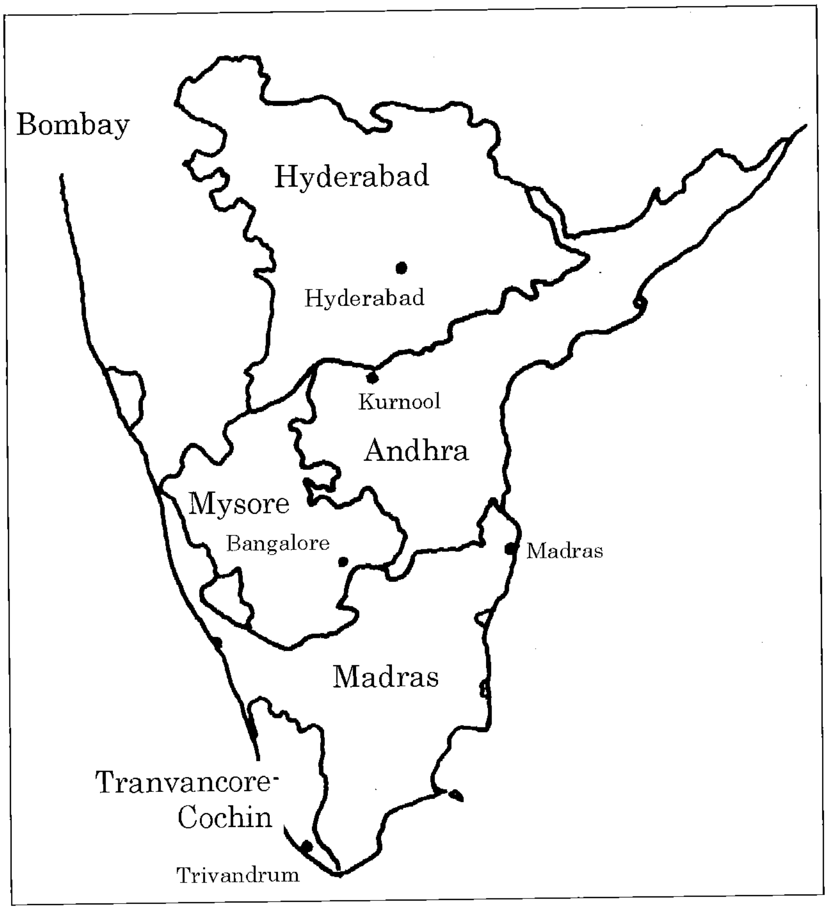
What followed was a series of events that proved crucial. Had Hindi already attained the status of national language, the question of whether states would be created on the basis of regional languages would not have been so significant, and even state reorganization along linguistic lines might have been implemented without much opposition. The 'linguistic principle' had been an officially accepted policy of the Indian National Congress for setting up regional branches since the Nagpur session in 1920. However, Articles 343 and 345 transformed state reorganization into a grave and weighty issue due to the possibility that inviolable cultural territories would spring up all over India. When the trauma of Partition was still fresh, it was understandable that those who had once hoped in vain to make Hindi the national language believed that they had to prevent linguistic states coming into existence at any cost.

In 1948, the government appointed the Linguistic Provinces Commission, known as the Dar Commission, to inquire into the creation of the proposed provinces of Andhra, Karnataka, Kerala, and Maharashtra. The commission came out strongly against any reorganization and also against adopting the linguistic principle as the prime consideration. The report of the Dar Commission invited bitter discontent and opposition among people, particularly in the Andhra and Karnataka regions. However, the Congress quickly reacted by appointing the JVP Committee, the initials deriving from the first letters of the first names of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, and Pattabhi Sitaramayya who were members. It 'was the first Congress body to sound a note of warning against the linguistic principle' (*State Reorganization Commission Report* [hereafter *SRCR*], Delhi, 1955, para. 62). The report was submitted the following year, and it openly maintained that 'the primary consideration must be the security, unity and economic prosperity of India and every separatist and disruptive tendency should be rigorously discouraged' (*SRCR*, para. 62). It recommended the maintenance of the status quo and the postponement of state reorganization. The standstill, however, dramatically changed after the fast-unto-death in December 1952 by Potti Sriramulu, demanding the creation of Andhra State, which was followed by large-scale outbreak of violence.

In fact, the political history of the Andhra movement is traceable to 1913 when the Andhra Mahasabha was formed. In the beginning, however, it had not been a separatist movement although a sense of rivalry against Tamils who were dominant in Madras Presidency formed the background. The Telugus did not openly deny that their language was Dravidian, but they considered their culture to be essentially 'Aryan'. In 1907, the first Telugu book on Indian history, *Hindu Desa Katha Samgraham* (A Short History of India), was written and published by K. Venkata Lakshmana Rao. In this, he described Indians as Hindus, Hindus as Aryans, and Andhras as one of them (K. V. L. Rao 1907, 1908). In 1910, the first Telugu book on Andhra history, *Andhrula Charitram*, was written by C. Virabhadra Rao. Here, he categorically defined the Andhras as Aryans (V. Rao 1910: 51–2), and this book became the ideological source of the Andhra movement that started three years after its publication. The history of this movement is an example of linguistic regionalism for Indianization. Its nature and trajectory was entirely different from Tamil regionalism, and thus, it vividly portrayed the diversity of the people's consciousness vis-à-vis their region as well as the country, India. Finally, Andhra State, 'the first linguistic state in Independent India', was formed in 1953 by separating Telugu-speaking areas from Madras. Andhra activists then turned their attention to a bigger Vishalandhra, annexing Telangana (the eastern half of the former Hyderabad princely state) to Andhra state and combining all the Telugu regions into a single entity. Here again, there was no separatist element as such, but the political leadership at the Centre considered the linguistic principle a threat to national unity, and Nehru severely criticized the idea of Vishalandhra as 'expansionist imperialism'.

In 1953, the central government appointed the States Reorganization Commission to look into the matter of overall reorganization. The commission, in fact, explored an alternative to linguistic states by examining the possibility of forming multilingual states. A key to the problem was held by Hyderabad State. It consisted of three linguistic regions—Telugu, Kannada, and Marathi—but historically Urdu had been imposed by the Nizams and Muslim elites who were in a minority. Considering its size and geographic location in the heart of India, its disintegration was 'directly relevant to the examination of certain important proposals regarding the adjourning areas' (*SRCR*, para. 359). There were some who had argued that 'with the background of Urdu education Hindi can easily be made popular in Hyderabad' (*SRCR*, para. 366), and others maintained that 'Hyderabad, if permitted to exist as a unit, could become a centre of north Indian culture and become the carrier of Hindi to the South' (*SRCR*, para. 361). The final report of the Commission was submitted in 1955. It recommended creation of the states of Madras (renamed Tamil Nadu in 1969), Mysore (renamed Karnataka in 1973), and Kerala (see Map 8.1). Regarding Hyderabad, its trifurcation was proposed, with the Kannada-speaking area going to Mysore State and the Marathi area to Maharashtra. However, the commission did not agree to Telangana being merged with Andhra, and instead, proposed the formation of a separate state. After some political manoeuvring and some turmoil among local Telugu leaders, it was decided to form a united Telugu state, Andhra Pradesh.

What the ultimate principle behind state reorganization was is difficult to determine. In fact, the final report persisted in advocating that it should not be linguistic. The first priority according to it was the 'preservation and strengthening of the unity and security of India'.



Map 8.1 South Indian States in 1955
Source: Courtesy of Keiko Yamada.

Financial, economic, and administrative considerations are also said to be 'equally important' (*SRCR*, para. 92). The latter part was specifically meant for the Second Five-Year Plan starting in 1956. The Government could well vindicate itself by saying that the fact that the borders of the four states of south India coincided with their linguistic boundaries was merely incidental: the result of pursuing national integration, security, and economic development, and not of adopting the linguistic principle that would often be associated with regionalism in the south. As for administrative convenience, a good precedent popular among Indian political leaders in those days was the system of the erstwhile Soviet Union, which was grounded on the doctrine of self-determination of people who shared common languages and cultures. So, one may even argue that even without a linguistic movement, the Indian Government would have employed the linguistic principle in the end as a realistic solution. There is some truth though in saying that state reorganization was based on the linguistic principle, and that it was 'achieved' by the regional movements of south India, especially because national leaders like Nehru were paranoid that linguistic diversity would jeopardize India's integrity, even as the Partition had. But for the resistance from the south, the feasibility of Hindi becoming a national language or India being organized as multilingual states should never be dismissed as negligible. In other words, the history and experience of regionalism in south India from the nineteenth century forced the new Government to revise or discard the idea of Hindi-centred national integration.

Looking back now, and seeing that non-Hindi speakers in the south also enjoy Hindi cinema and even regionalists accept being Indians, the days of fights and doubts, and the fear that India might disintegrate without Hindi or multilingual states, appears to be a thing of the past. Currently, language policy and linguistic states are often held up as evidence that India is a democratic country with a spirit of tolerance and cultural diversity. Of course, many problems still exist. For example, the importance of English is reinforced more than before, and the dominant language groups have intensified caste politics and endangered minorities in states. The reason that people stopped contesting 'Indianness' in the field of language might be that, with the rise of the Hindu right, religious ties became predominant. However, or even more so, increasing demands for inclusion in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution and the creation of new states testify to the strength of people's belief that linguistic diversity is unarguably good. It has been long since 'the end of linguistic principle' was talked about after the outbreak of the separate Telangana movement at the close of the 1960s. In the movement, the Telangana dialect (of Telugu) is often cited as a marker of the region, a distinct cultural unit that deserves to have a separate state. In the fact that the demand is to establish plural states for a single language, theoretically, but never a multilingual state, we find that the linguistic principle is far from having been abandoned. Conversely, a new linguistic principle is being sought to guarantee further diversity of Indian languages and cultures by revising the federal system.

8.2.2 State Politics in Tamil Nadu

MIWAKO SHIGA

The legacy of the Non-Brahmin Movement tradition has affected Tamil society in various ways. The terms 'non-Brahmin' and 'Dravidian' gradually lost their multiplicity of meanings and were eventually confined to the linguistic and regional identity of the Tamils. With time, 'equality' became political common sense and the reservation policy was expanded by the Dravidian parties that took over the movement. The tradition also curtailed the infiltration of Hindu communalism and violence against Muslims for several decades. However, the fact that the Dravidian parties have now become the mainstream in state-level politics has produced new phenomena in Tamil Nadu.

8.2.2.1 *From the Non-Brahmin/Dravidian Movement to the Tamil Movement: The Anti-Hindi Campaign*

The Dravida Kazhagam (DK) attracted the younger generation and C. A. Annadurai, an ardent supporter of the Anti-Hindi Movement, became one of EVR's lieutenants in the DK (see Figure 8.6). After Independence, however, the differences between EVR and Annadurai on several issues became markedly evident, leading to confrontations. Annadurai considered Independence the accomplishment of the entire Indian population, not merely that of the Aryan North. EVR, on the other hand, outraged at the British betrayal of the Dravidians/non-Brahmins in transferring power to a Brahmin oligarchy, refused to recognize the Indian Constitution.

In 1949, Annadurai and other younger DK members gradually grew discontented with what they perceived as autocratic leadership and left the DK to form a new party, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) that was more democratic, and had stronger local branches with easier access to the central executive committee. The party targeted the urban working class, the lower-middle class, students, and unemployed graduates for support (Hardgrave 1965: 32–5).

Neither the DK nor the DMK contested the first state assembly elections of 1951–2. Annadurai did not support any party declaring that the DMK was genuinely communist in its ideals but that it would never ally with the Communist Party until communists took a pledge in support of Dravidasthan. The DK, on the other hand, disregarding ideological differences, extended its support to the Communist Party with the common purpose of defeating the Congress.

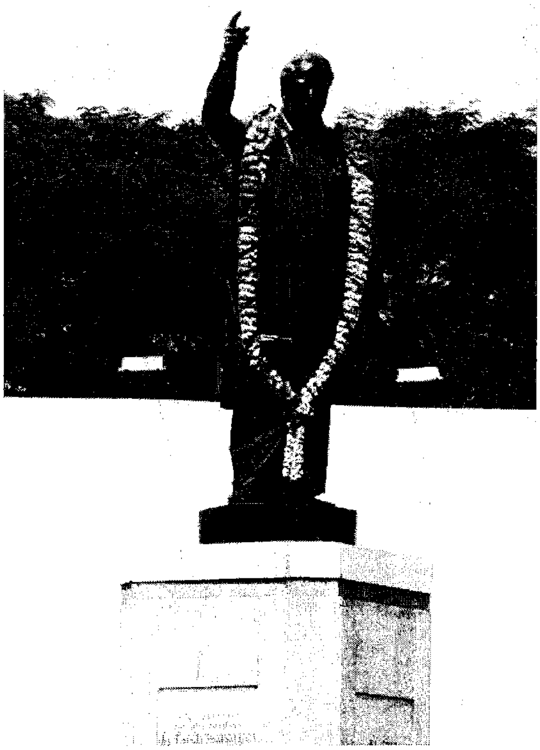


Figure 8.6 Statue of Annadurai on Marina Beach, Chennai
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

Helped by the non-participation of the DK and the DMK, the Congress in Madras captured 133 of the 190 seats in the Legislative Assembly. C. Rajagopalachari's ministry announced an educational scheme that would ensure training in trades and skills under

Varnashrama Dharma, a programme that faced fierce opposition from not only the DK and the DMK but also from a large number of his own party members. Taking advantage of the furious agitation of the Dravidian parties against the scheme, the Congress members voted against Rajagopalachari. K. Kamaraj Nadar took over the reins of power from the latter in 1954, and excluded Brahmins from his cabinet (Hardgrave 1965: 45). This transfer of power from Brahmins to non-Brahmin lower castes within the Congress symbolized the impact of the Non-Brahmin Movement in the South (see Figure 8.7).

Figure 8.7 The Kamaraj Statue on Marina Beach, Chennai
Source: Courtesy of S. Rajagopal.

In 1956, the states of India were reorganized along linguistic lines, following the formation of Andhra Pradesh from the Telugu-speaking areas in 1953. With the loss of Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam areas, Madras became a Tamil-dominant state. The DMK gradually gained power, taking advantage of this Tamil dominance in Madras. Participating in the 1957 state election,[46] it became the second-most powerful party, winning 15 seats with 14.6 per cent of the vote, although the Congress was again victorious (Hardgrave 1965: 60).

Within twenty years of Independence, the image of the Congress as a leading body in the independence struggle began diminishing in popular memory. Instead, the failures of its policies fostered discontent among the middle and lower classes/castes. They blamed the Congress for the food shortages in the 1960s which, according to them, were caused by the party's scant attention to agriculture. These strata strengthened their political consciousness, as apparent in the increasing voter turnout, from 44.87 per cent nationwide in 1951 to 61.04 per cent in 1967.[47] This swelling dissatisfaction and political consciousness resulted in the emergence of regional parties and the beginning of the decline of the Congress.

In Madras, the recrudescence of the language problem triggered a political change, provoking resentment among the Tamils. The Congress union government announced through the Presidential Order of 1960 that Hindi should be the only official language of the Union after 1965, according to a controversial provision in the Constitution.[48] The announcement was not acceptable to many non-Hindi speakers, who desired the continued use of English. Just as in the late 1930s, furious anti-Hindi agitations occurred in Madras state again. Several students committed suicide by self-immolation as a protest against the announcement.

The DMK played a leading role in the anti-Hindi campaign. It urged people to unite under the Tamil identity, using the symbols of a common culture in Tamil country and an ancient Tamilian/Dravidian civilization. In order to soothe the antipathy among non-Hindi speakers, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had to enact the Official Languages Act in 1963, which ensured that the use of English would continue even after 1965. It was ironic that the attempt to unite the Indian nation by means of a common language, Hindi, encouraged instead Tamil nationalism and empowered the Congress's rival, the DMK.

8.2.2.2 *The Formation of a Non-Congress State Government*

In the 1967 state elections, the DMK defeated the Congress and came to power with Annadurai

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[46] In a 1956 conference held at Tiruchirappalli, the DMK decided to contest the forthcoming elections and issued a manifesto. It accepted the existing Constitutional set-up, but also pointed out that each state had full freedom to secede from the Indian Union if it so desired and that each should be given full and equal representation in Parliament. The manifesto also denounced the Five-Year Plan, saying it was formulated to develop the north while neglecting the south.

[47] *Statistical Report on General Elections, 1951–1952, to the First Lok Sabha*, vol. 1, National and State Abstracts and Detailed Results, Election Commission of India, p. 5; *Statistical Report on General Elections, 1967, to the Fourth Lok Sabha*, vol. 1, National and State Abstracts and Detailed Results, Election Commission of India, p. 4.

[48] The issue of the official language for the Indian Republic had provoked considerable debate during the framing of the Constitution. The dispute resulted in a compromise: Hindi would be adopted as the official language of the Union with English continuing as an associate official language for a period of fifteen years, after which Hindi would become the sole official language. Since the Constitution came into effect in 1950, 1965 marked the end of that period.

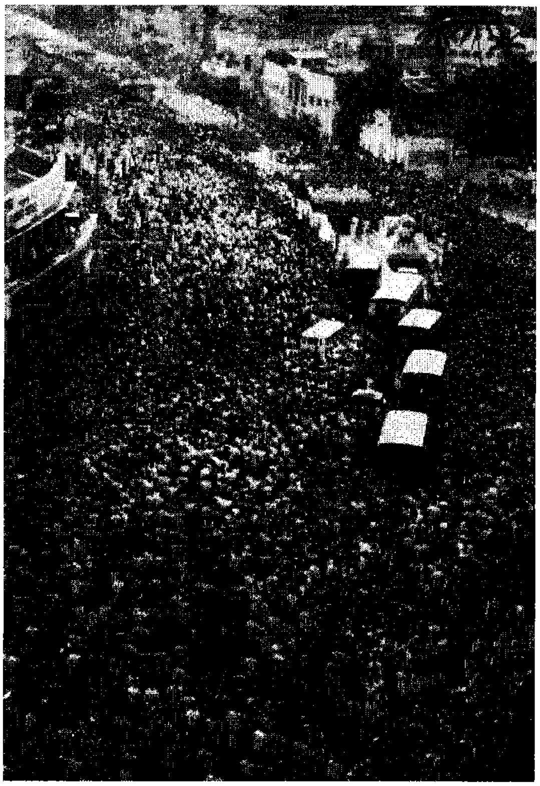

Figure 8.8 Procession and People in Anna Salai on the Occasion of the 2nd Tamil Conference in Chennai in 1968
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

as chief minister. Madras[49] thus became the only state in India in which a lone opposition party could form a cabinet on its own.

The DMK adopted populist methods to mobilize the masses, one of which was the utilization of the film industry (see Figure 8.8). As producers, scriptwriters, and directors, Annadurai and other party members had strong connections with the film industry in Madras. They produced many films for the party's propaganda, and many film actors and actresses also participated in these activities with the ambition of increasing their own popularity by riding on the DMK's growing influence (Dickey 1993: 22; Vaasanthi 2006: 35–41).

The popularity of film stars, however, did not always have a positive effect on the party's stability, as was apparent when Annadurai died in 1969. He was succeeded as chief minister by M. K. Karunanidhi but M. G. Ramachandran (MGR), a film actor and party member who had built a strong political base through his popularity as a film hero, challenged Karunanidhi. In 1972, MGR seceded from the DMK, and formed a new party, the Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK, renamed AIADMK).[50]

8.2.2.3 *The Establishment of the Two-Dravidian/Tamilian-Party System*

The formation of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) marked the beginning of a two-party system in Tamil Nadu. Thereafter, one or the other of the two Dravidian parties, the DMK or the AIADMK, has been in power. The AIADMK consecutively swept the polls in the state elections of 1977, 1980, and 1984, and MGR retained the post of chief minister until his death in December 1987. After his death, the AIADMK temporarily split in two, with his wife Janaki heading one group and his former co-star J. Jayalalitha (who later added an extra 'a' at the end of her name) leading the other, but the two factions merged again under the leadership of the latter (see Figure 8.9).

In the 1989 state elections, the DMK won the polls and Karunanidhi rose to power again as chief minister. The DMK government,

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[49] Madras state was renamed Tamil Nadu by the DMK government in 1969.

[50] The Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam was later renamed the All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK).

Figure 8.9 Jayalalithaa with MGR in an AIADMK Poster on a Wall
Source: Courtesy of Miwako Shiga.

however, was dismissed by a central promulgation on the grounds that it had allowed members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) of Sri Lanka to act freely. Shortly thereafter, an LTTE suicide bomber assassinated Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi of the Congress, near Madras (Chennai). This incident was a further setback to the DMK and the AIADMK, in an alliance with the Congress, triumphed in the 1991 state elections, with Jayalalithaa returning to power.

8.2.2.4 *The Emergence of Identity Politics*

The emergence of regional parties was not restricted to Tamil Nadu but was also witnessed in other states. From the 1980s, this tendency has been accompanied by the spread of identity politics.

In the 1971 general election, the Congress, led by Indira Gandhi, barely succeeded in winning the vote with its populist measures but in 1977 it was defeated by an alliance of opposition parties united under the banner of 'anti-Congress'. The success of the Congress in the elections of 1980 and 1984 was nothing more than an outcome of the splits among these opposition parties.[51]

In this fluid political situation, many parties began to appeal to religious and caste identities in order to stabilize their support bases. For example, the attitude of the Congress toward the Shah Bano case in 1985 was followed by the enactment of the Muslim Women Protection Act, which reflected its desire to secure Muslim support. This ignited Hindu nationalism and helped the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Similarly, Prime Minister V. P. Singh, who headed the National Front government, announced in 1989 the implementation of the Mandal Commission's recommendations that had been shelved for a decade.[52] This was intended to win the support of the Other Backward Castes (OBCs) who comprised a majority of the Indian population. This announcement instigated sharp criticism and protests from higher castes all over India, except Tamil Nadu where reservations for non-Brahmin castes had already been realized in the 1920s.

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[51] The assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984 saw Congress winning a sympathy vote in the election held soon after.

[52] The Mandal Commission was appointed in 1979 by the Janata Party government. It considered the question of quotas for 'backward' people and submitted its report in 1980, upholding affirmative action for members of lower castes by way of exclusive access to a certain proportion of government jobs and

In Tamil Nadu also, both the DMK and the AIADMK tried to mobilize support on caste lines by increasing the number of castes to the list of backward castes covered under the state government's protection policy. The caste issue thus became a problem to be addressed through the distribution of profit and not something that needed to be solved or abolished through socio-religious reforms.

8.2.2.5 *The Formation of Alliances: The Participation of Regional Parties in National Politics*

In the 1990s, regional parties that had come to power at the state level were to find their way into national politics. The origin of this new phenomenon was the decline of national parties at the Centre. After 1989, no party could win a majority vote in the general election. This instability gave birth to the formation of multiparty alliances that included regional parties.

National parties[53] such as the Congress and the BJP could no longer secure a majority vote on their own and now had to form alliances consisting of several regional parties from each state. Figures 8.10 and 8.11 indicate the increase in the numbers of regional parties that participated in the general elections and the winners belonging to them.

In the 1998 general election, the AIADMK joined hands with the BJP, but then withdrew its support, bringing down the BJP-led government. The following year, the DMK was BJP's ally and brought it back to power. These episodes illustrate the increasing presence of regional parties in national politics through alliance formation.

Taking note of the BJP alliance, the Congress also began to team up with regional parties. A system of opposition thus began between two main alliances: the Congress alliance, on the one hand, and the BJP alliance, on the other.[54] This system has given regional parties opportunities to articulate the concerns of their respective regions on the national stage.

The alliance system offered smaller and weaker regional parties the possibility of political bargaining. The 'untouchable'[55] parties in Tamil Nadu took advantage of this at the centre. Under the regime of the two Dravidian/Tamilian parties, the Scheduled Castes have long faced difficulties in forming their own political parties to voice their discontent. Both the DMK and the AIADMK, as successors of the Non-Brahmin/

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of admissions to universities, and recommended an increase in these quotas for Other Backward Castes, Scheduled Castes and Tribes from 27 per cent to 49.5 per cent. The then government, however, considering their impact, did not carry out these recommendations.

[53] The concepts of 'national' and 'state' political parties are the creation of the Election Commission. The formulas to determine 'state' or 'national' status are based on the numbers of votes and seats won. To be recognized as a 'state party', a political party would have to fulfil one of the following conditions:

Condition A: Secure one out of every 25 votes in the Lok Sabha or one out of every 30 seats in the State Assembly in the previous election.

Condition B: Secure 6 per cent of the vote in the State Assembly election or Lok Sabha election.

To be a 'national party', one has to be a 'state party' in at least four states (Election Commission of India, *Political Parties and Election Symbols*, New Delhi, 1998).

[54] Sometimes a third alliance is formed.

[55] It is politically sensitive issue which term to chose to indicate so-called untouchables, as mentioned in note 42 of section 7.5.4. Hereafter we use the official term Scheduled Castes.

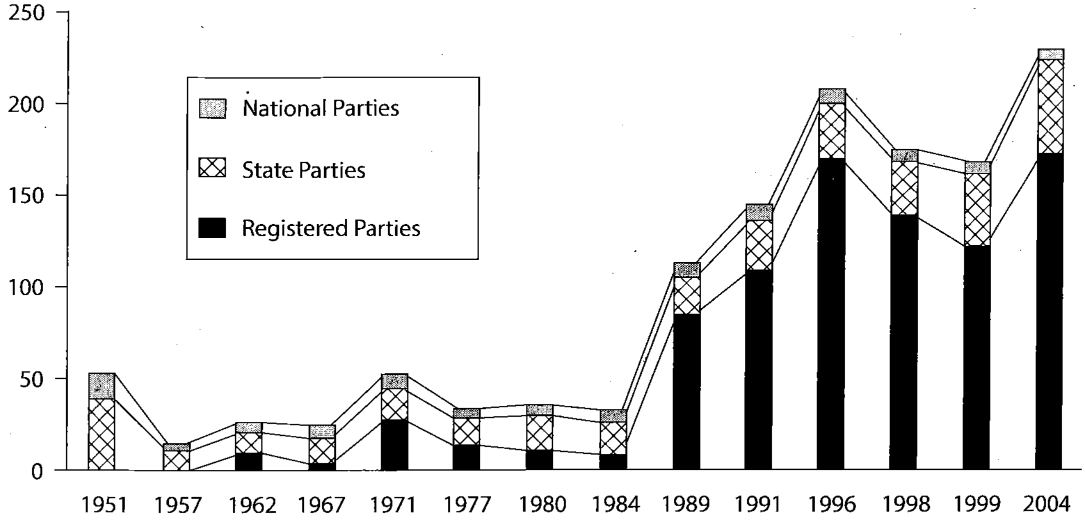

Figure 8.10 The Number of Parties Participating in the General Elections
Source: Election Commission of India, *Statistical Reports on General Elections*, 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1971, 1977, 1989, 1984, 1989, 1991, 1996, 1998, 1999, and 2004.

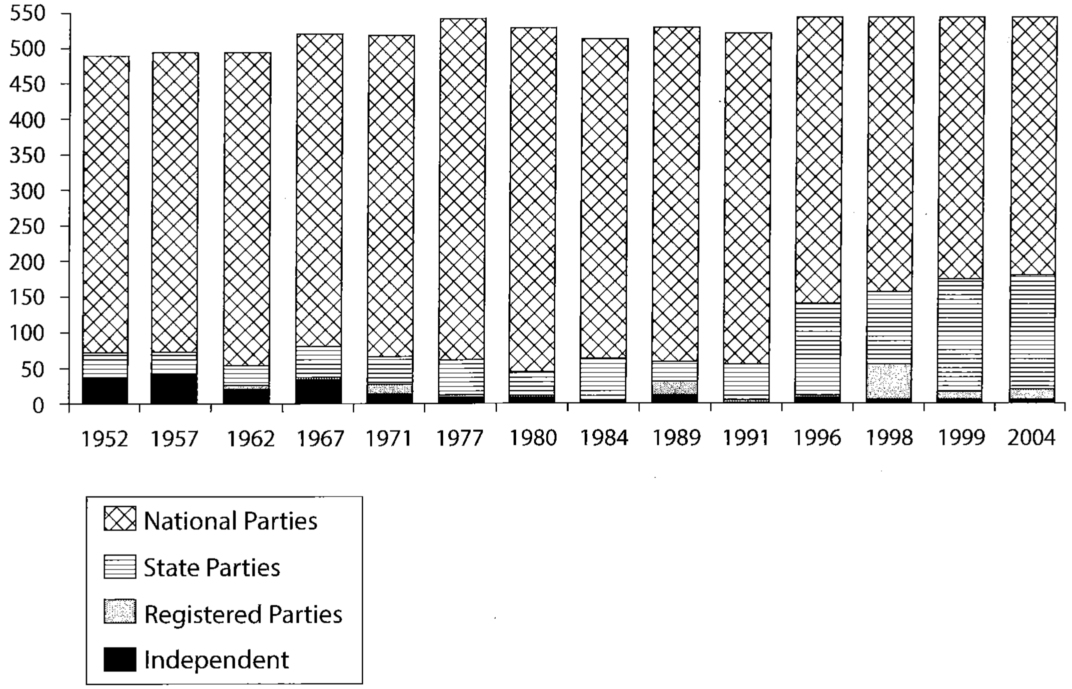

Figure 8.11 The Number of Winning Candidates from Each Party Type
Source: Election Commission of India, *Statistical Reports on General Elections*, 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1971, 1977, 1989, 1984, 1989, 1991, 1996, 1998, 1999, and 2004.

Dravidian Movement, claim to represent the entire non-Brahmin/Tamil community, which, according to them, is homogeneous and free from discrimination. Some members of the Scheduled Castes have gradually improved their socio-economic conditions through the quota system. But this has, in turn, provoked jealousy and antipathy among the Other Backward Castes such as the Thevars. The 1980s saw the prevalence of physically violent attacks on Scheduled Castes, as also counter-attacks by the latter (Viswanathan 2005: xxv–xxvii), some of whom in Madras city were temporarily attracted to the Hindu communalist organizations that provided welfare services to them, but soon came to recognize that these bodies legitimized Brahminism and the caste-based Brahminical social order. The discourse of the traditional Non-Brahmin/Dravidian Movement has become part of the Scheduled Castes' common sense. They have taken this further, considering not only Brahmins but also non-Brahmins as oppressors and consolidating their identity as 'Dalits' (Anandhi 1995: 36–49).

One group of untouchables organized themselves under the flag of the Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK, or Liberation Panthers Party), but at first the members had to stand as candidates of existing Dravidian parties. However, under the new alliance system, where any small and weak party could become a crucial partner in strengthening the alliance, the VCK finally succeeded in producing two Legislative Assembly members in 2006 and one Lok Sabha member in 2009.

The emergence of the two Dravidian parties made it possible for them to enter national politics through alliance formation. But the longer this process continues, the more empowered the smaller and weaker parties based on caste or region become. Neither the DMK nor the AIADMK can continue to avoid reconsidering their discourse of a 'homogeneous Tamil' community. Similarly, every party, including the VCK and other Dalit parties, that claims to represent one community or caste now needs to pay close attention to internal distinctions such as gender and economic disparities.

8.2.3 State Politics in Andhra Pradesh

KEIKO YAMADA

For twenty-eight years since the formation of Andhra Pradesh (AP) in 1956, the Congress had not only held on to power in the state, but also proved vital to the government of the parent party at the centre. Even in the fourth Lok Sabha election in 1967, when the Congress faced a historic setback everywhere else, it could still scrape through with a bare majority mainly because it won as many as thirty-five seats out of the forty-one allotted to AP. In the state Legislative Assembly elections too, held the same year, the Congress won an overwhelming majority in the state while in the neighbouring state of Madras, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) won and the communist-led coalition came to power in Kerala.

The Congress' firm foothold in Andhra Pradesh is not without historical reasons. Its strength can be traced back to the days of the national movement when the basic structure and style of regional politics evolved with the formation of grassroots-level Congress institutions and the way they helped 'mass' mobilization at every level. Even the non-Brahmin and Leftist movements, which were instrumental in the formation of rival political parties in other states, have largely been overshadowed by, or in some cases even merged into, the Congress in Andhra Pradesh. However, from the latter half of the 1960s, certain political aspects that the party had overlooked came to the fore and the roots of discontent began to threaten the integrity of the state. Two major issues were the Srikakulam armed struggle and the Separate Telangana movement.

Srikakulam is the northernmost district of the coastal region, and one of the most socio-economically backward places in AP. Tribal people, collectively called Girijans, inhabited the Eastern Ghats but gradually moneylenders and rich traders from the plains invaded the region. Newcomers soon deprived the tribal people of their traditional rights and interests in forests and lands. Consequently, destitute Girijans were forced into bonded labour and were exploited. At the end of the 1950s, they formed the Girijana Sangham, but it was only during the mid-1960s that the movement turned radical. Vempatapu Satyanarayana (popularly called Satyam) was posted to Srikakulam as a schoolteacher and eventually became the leader of the Girijans. The uprising intensified from the end of 1967. A few prominent leaders had established a direct link with Charu Majumdar, the legendary head of the Naxalbari insurrection in Bengal, and with this the label 'Naxalite movement' was tagged to the struggle in Andhra Pradesh. In 1970, Satyam and other leaders of the movement were killed in a 'police encounter'. Many activists were arrested and charged in court trials. Facing a major setback, many Naxalites fled from Srikakulam to Telangana. However, the degree and the quality of the commitment of various Left parties like the CPI(ML) and other revolutionary organizations in the struggle has not been fully elucidated yet. The struggle in the Eastern Ghats did not subside even after the loss of some prominent leaders, and the region continued to be the most 'disturbed' area in AP.

Telangana, a backward region lacking modern socio-economic development, became the obvious choice for Naxalite leaders. In 1946, the 'Telangana armed struggle' was started by radical peasants led by Communists demanding the abolition of the feudal land system, bonded labour, and, of course, the Nizam's rule. The struggle was almost resolved by 1951. However, the annexation of Nizam's territory to India in 1948 by 'Police Action' caused a new problem. The people of Telangana were fearful of being 'colonized' by those from the more advanced coastal region. The Andhra politicians who had longed for a united Telugu state managed to conclude a Gentleman's Agreement with representatives from Telangana in 1956. Under this agreement, safeguards for education, employment, and budget for modern development in Telangana were promised. However, soon after the formation of AP, the fears of the people of Telangana proved true. The coastal people flooded into Hyderabad, the capital city, and its vicinity, depriving the locals (called Mulkis) of education and employment opportunities. As the migrants dominated party politics and were influential in the legislature, they diverted more money for the development of coastal Andhra. The first movement demanding a separate state began during the end of 1968. It was centred in the Osmania University and continued till 1969. In 1972 the coastal people, in turn, demanded separation from Telangana (the Jai Andhra movement). The situation became serious in 1973, but peace was finally restored with the imposition of President's Rule.

Contesting forces brought about noticeable changes not only in regional movements such as the Srikakulam struggle and the Separate Telangana movement, but also in party politics. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Brahmins had long played a leading role in the Congress. Later, by the time of the state's reorganization in 1956, Reddis and Kammas, both so-called dominant castes in the Telugu region, became active. The Reddis were numerically stronger and geographically more widespread than the Kammas, whereas the Kammas being lesser in number were geographically mostly concentrated in the coastal regions. After the formation of AP, the Kammas gradually moved to Hyderabad and its environs. The overall impression is that the Reddis are more successful than the Kammas in group politics, because of the advantage of their state-wide networks backed by population size and traditional agricultural background. As for the Kammas, though they played a leading role in the Left movement, their position in caste politics was not strong enough to surpass that of the Brahmins and the Reddis. However, importantly, many of them became successful in media and other industries, and finally came to form a distinct political group, a counterforce to the Congress.

In 1982, N. T. Rama Rao, a charismatic actor in Telugu cinema and himself a Kamma, set up the first regional party in AP, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP). Under the slogan of 'self-respect for the Telugu people' (*telugu vaari aatma gauravam*), the TDP won with a majority in the state election the next year. The Congress was defeated for the first time in the state. The major reason advanced for the loss was the people's disgust at the repeated intervention by the central body of the party in state politics since the 1970s, especially during the Indira Gandhi period. In this context, the clarion call for upholding regional (state) pride met with widespread approval. In fact, the idea of TDP came from the AIADMK in Tamil Nadu. However, there was a crucial difference between the two parties. While the AIADMK was a successor to the Dravidian ideology that was in line with the established policy in the state, the TDP was a challenger to the established line of the Congress, which was instrumental in founding AP, the state of united Telugus. Therefore, any objection to the Congress naturally would need to come with a new self-definition of the Telugu people. It seemed that this was mainly manifested in the form of economic aspirations.

Those who supported the Telugu Desam were both the rich and the poor affected by the decline in the state's economy since the 1960s. N. T. Rama Rao targeted mainly the poor and introduced populist measures such as promising to sell rice at two rupees a kilogram to the poor. As for the centrality of the economic problems in AP, it is worthwhile considering why the Leftists failed to garner popular support in the end, unlike in Kerala or West Bengal, even though they were presumed to be considerably strong. An answer may be that the Kammas, who had long been practically and ideologically leading the Left movement within and outside the Congress, were gradually attracted to the capitalist economy. Not only the Kammas, but those disillusioned with Left's inability to discard stale approaches also found appeal in the TDP's economic regionalism. This tendency became all the more evident after N. Chandrababu Naidu, son-in-law of N. T. Rama Rao, became the Chief Minister in 1995. He openly promoted pro-global and IMF-friendly policies, and encouraged the information technology (IT) industry in particular. At the same time, he took severely oppressive measures against the Naxalites (the People's War Group).

But the new self-image of economically affluent Telugus presented by the TDP fell short of the measures actually taken and the dissatisfaction was made manifest in the party's defeat in the 2004 elections. The growing disparities among people and regions had come to the fore, the TDP's plank of Telugu pride notwithstanding. But the Congress, despite riding back to power by championing a broader context for economic liberalization, essentially implemented the main policies of the TDP with minor changes. In 2009, the 'Separate Telangana' agitation was reignited. Though it appeared initially to be a revival of the 1969 movement, in reality it was different. Not only urban intellectuals and politicians, but rural and urban people cutting across all party lines, including the Congress and the Telugu Desam, lent their weight to the new stir. Minority groups, weaker sections, and even Naxalites figure in the current movement. More than half a century after the birth of the state, a movement fundamentally questioning the initial premise of political unity based on a common language is ushering in a new age in regional politics.

(After the author finished writing this article, the new state of Telangana was born on 2 June 2014 as India's twenty-ninth state.)

8.2.4 The Women's Movement in Post-Independence South India

PARVATHI MENON

Independence in August 1947 saw, curiously, a diminished visibility of women—those who had fought so courageously for freedom—in public life. Political parties, once so voluble on the rights of women, appeared to have little use for the enormous talents of women who had given so much to the attainment of independence. In fact, in the first elections after Independence in 1952, women constituted only 4 per cent of those elected to the Lok Sabha.

> After Independence, many within the bourgeois–liberal trend believed that once Independence was achieved, the new framework of power would provide an adequate opportunity for addressing women's problems. Thus, women needed to be represented within the system and the status quo, and their concerns adequately articulated, after which their demands would be met. What the bourgeois–liberal women's movement, then principally of course affiliated to the Congress, wanted was a level playing field for women; they had no problem with the game itself. (Karat 2005: 5)

The violent legacy of Partition, and communal hatred in the years immediately following Independence affected women directly. They were the targets of attack by the forces of Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim fundamentalists. Though south India remained relatively untouched, the brutality of communalism faced by women in Punjab, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and Bengal, seared deep into the consciousness of women's movements and provided lessons for the future. Anis Kidwai, a Congress activist and victim of the Partition, has provided a moving account of those years (Kidwai 2011).

8.2.4.1 *Legal Rights*

Articles 14, 15, and 16 of the Indian Constitution gave women the rights to equality under the law against any form of discrimination, and of equality of opportunity in public life. These were enormous victories, even though religion and social convention often diluted these rights in practice.

Women fought for further legal reform, notably for changes in laws rooted in religious practice. A series of separate Acts under the Hindu Code were passed under strident opposition from fundamentalist Hindus. The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 enforced monogamy, outlawed polygamy, and gave equal rights of divorce to both men and women. The Special Marriages Act 1954 was a secular legislation that allowed persons of different faiths to marry and also gave the couple equal rights of divorce. The Hindu Succession Act, 1956, gave daughters equal rights of inheritance, a significant step on the road to legal equality for women. The Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Bill, 1956, was another important legislation of this period. It allowed female children to be adopted, and made mandatory the consent of the wife in adoption. It also allowed unmarried women to adopt.

A book on south Indian history must make a special mention of the role played by the Self-Respect Movement in Tamil Nadu under the leadership of E. V. Ramaswami (1879–1973), or Periyar (The Great Man), as he came to be called. His vision for women's emancipation was radical for its time and place, even if its actual impact may have been small, principally owing to the fact that Periyar's vision was principally against the institution of caste and the oppressive role of Brahminism in society. Indeed, he believed that Brahminism, and not colonialism, was the force that had to be defeated first. Nevertheless, Periyar was a unique political leader-cum-social reformer who during his lifetime relentlessly fought the hold of the upper castes in the political, social, and economic spheres, and who championed the cause of reason, science, and self-respect. He became President of the Justice Party and founded the Dravidar Kazhagam, a political organization that was to change the political landscape of Tamil Nadu.

The emancipation of women from the bonds of caste, and more specifically from the stranglehold of patriarchy, was perhaps the most radical aspect of Periyar's social programme. His views on love, sexuality, and marriage stemmed from his firm and outspoken rationalist and progressive beliefs (Gopalakrishnan 1991: 31–2); expensive religious weddings were condemned and civil marriage advocated (Periyar 1996: 19); widow-remarriage supported (Periyar 1996: 34); women's education was championed (Periyar 1996: 41); false morality condemned (Periyar 1996: 57); personal freedoms for women upheld (Periyar 1996: 58); ostentation that was often forced on women decried (Periyar 1996: 79); and notions of love and marriage recast (Periyar 1996: 81). At the Self-Respect Conference held at Chengalpattu in 1929, among the many resolutions were those that called for equal property rights, and equal employment and educational rights for women (Gopalakrishnan 1991: 31–2).

8.2.4.2 *The 1960s*

If the 1950s saw important gains for women in the sphere of legal reform, the 1960s were years of relative quiescence, and even introspection. Women's organizations, notably those allied to the Congress focussed on the social 'uplift' of women. A plethora of official schemes for women were put in place, and many organizations and activists believed that this was the decade when the fetters upon women would loosen.

8.2.4.3 *The 1970s*

The illusion vanished by the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. A turning point in the women's movement and its understanding of the woman's question in India came with the publication and release of the first Status of Indian Women Report brought out by the Government of India in response to the International Year of Women declared by the United Nations in 1975. Its findings were a harsh indictment of the development path pursued by the Congress. Its authors showed that women had made modest gains in their economic and social standing, but had lost out significantly in the post-Independence development story (Forbes 1998: 226–34).

The Emergency (1975–7) was a watershed for the Indian women's movement and for the democratic movement in the country as a whole. On the pretext of internal threats to the state, the government under the then prime minister Indira Gandhi suspended democratic rights including the right to protest. Thousands of men and women were arrested and tortured, and a broad though amorphous anti-Emergency front emerged across political parties and groups.

Three broad trends arose within the women's movement in this period. The liberal trend was represented by the All-India Women's Conference and other pro-establishment groups that highlighted reform for women within the framework of the Constitution and the rights that it conferred on women.

The second was the Left trend represented by women's organizations that took forward the left legacy of the freedom movement, forming organizations at the state level. For example, the *mahila sanghams* in Telangana and Andhra amalgamated to form the Andhra Pradesh Mahila Sangham. Its leaders were prominent freedom fighters and included women like M. Suryavati, Mallu Swarajyam, Kanabala Rajeshwaramma, and Sita Mahalakshmamma. In the years between 1971 and 1981, there was considerable growth in the *sangham* in terms of membership and reach. The organization prepared a charter of demands that included minimum wages for women agricultural workers, legislation against violence, and for quotas in the legislature. 'We presented these demands to the N. T. Rama Rao government, and six out of the ten demands were accepted,' Swarajyam was to recall (Menon 2004: 65).

In Tamil Nadu, Janaki Ammal and Pappa Umanath were primarily responsible for laying the foundations of the Left women's movement. Both had been active in Ponmalai in the years before and after Independence and had set up a women's organization in the 1940s, its members drawn mainly from the families of railway workers. The organization later spread to other districts, and the early struggles centred on price rise and the proper functioning of ration shops, and domestic violence. In 1974, the first conference of the state unit of the Democratic Women's Association was held in Tiruvarur, with Janaki Ammal as president and Pappa Umanath as secretary (Menon 2004: 117).

The Kerala Mahila Federation was formed in 1981 with K. R. Gauri and Susheela Gopalan at the helm. Susheela played a stellar role in transforming the conditions of work in the coir industry, both as a trade unionist and later as a minister in the government of E. K. Nayanar between 1996 and 2001 (Mukherjee 1989: 74). In 1971, she was instrumental in setting up the Coir Workers Centre, of which she remained president till her death in 2002. Susheela led several campaigns and struggles for higer wages and bonus, for the regulation of trade in husk, and for the implementation of what was called the Coir Reorganisation Scheme, under which the entire coir yarn spinning industry was to be organized into workers cooperatives. With a major strike in 1974, of which she was the moving spirit, the workers' union won important demands.

The third trend was represented by a large number of urban-based autonomous feminist groups comprising activists who had opposed Emergency. These groups addressed the oppressions that women faced in the domestic and personal spheres, areas they believed the large women's organizations, including those on the Left, had ignored. Many of these were influenced by the rise of feminist theory and practice and placed the woman question largely in the context of gender. The primary identity of women was not that of class, caste, or community, but rather as victims of patriarchy. 'The personal is political' was the slogan that underlay the understanding of such groups. In October 1975, at the United Women's

Liberation Struggle Conference in Pune, a large number of autonomous groups came together to discuss the gamut of issues that confronted women (Forbes 1998: 244)

8.2.4.4 *The 1980s*

The Mathura rape case of 1980 in which the Supreme Court overturned a lower court's decision to sentence the policemen who had raped a 14-year-old tribal girl caused a wave of revulsion in India. The first big joint struggles among women's groups in the early 1980s centred on anti-rape and anti-dowry struggles.

> Although there were some in the movement who wanted to approach the issue of dowry as one related solely to growing greed and avariciousness of men, other issues were raised, like for example the demand for equal property rights, the demands for changes in the law, the demand against police negligence or complicity. The role of the State in strengthening patriarchal values was raised. Women as mothers-in-law or sisters-in-law were often the agents of the violence, and therefore the issue of dowry violence could not be posed simply as a man–woman issue but was related to the wider question of the deteriorating status of women and the perception of women as a burden. (Karat 2005: 9–10)

An incident of the forcible burning, or 'sati', of Roop Kanwar, a young woman in Deorala, Rajasthan, in 1987, highlighted the persistence of medieval attitudes to women. Following widespread struggles, and much media coverage, Parliament passed the Commission of Sati Prevention Act (1987), which outlawed not only sati but also its glorification.

In 1981, state units of Left women's organizations formed the All-India Women's Democratic Association in Chennai, creating a powerful national body with a common programmatic understanding of women's issues (Menon 2004: 4),

The 1980s saw other important developments that impacted women. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh security guards in 1984, and in the anti-Sikh riots that broke out after that, it was women who, as in all riots, were the first targets. In the Shah Bano case of 1985, the Supreme Court granted Shah Bano, a Muslim divorcee, the right to receive maintenance from her divorced husband. Caving in to protests from conservative Muslim sections challenging the right to intervene in their personal laws, the government of Rajiv Gandhi introduced the Muslim Women's (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, which denied divorced Muslim women alimony, naming the natal family responsible in such situations. National women's organisations like the All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA), the National Federation of Indian Women, and the Mahila Dakshata Samiti,[56] strongly opposed the bill.

The 1980s also saw the emergence and consolidation of the Hindu Right. A campaign was launched by the Bharatiya Janata Party on 'reclaiming' the sixteenth century Ayodhya mosque—the birthplace, they claimed, of the Hindu god Ram. The Sangh Parivar instigated a spate of riots that targeted minorities. These intensified in the 1990s and into the next decade, culminating in the 2002 pogrom against Muslims in Gujarat. Women were the principal targets of attack during riots, and therefore also the opponents of such violence. On the eve of the 1989 elections, seven national women's organizations issued a joint appeal to women voters to only vote for secular parties (Karat 2005: 15).

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[56] The Mahila Dakshata Samiti was founded in 1976 in New Delhi to protect women and children in relation to the increase in the incidence of dowry deaths.

8.2.4.5 *The 1990s and After*

A new stage in the women's movement began in the early 1990s when the Indian government liberalized its economy, opening it to foreign investment, encouraging the privatization of essential services and other core sectors, and cutting back sharply on public investments. This decade also saw the dramatic upturn in the political fortunes of the Hindu right wing parties and forces. Both these tendencies impacted women. Neoliberal economic policies and market reform, aggressively pursued by successive governments since 1991, have worsened the lives and working conditions of millions of women, increasing unemployment and pushing more and more women into the unorganized sector (Ali: http://aidwaonline.org/aidwa-thinks/resistance-neoliberalism-subhashini).

Indeed, growing economic insecurity generated by the new economic milieu has provided fertile soil for the striking increase in the forms and extent of violence against women in both urban and rural settings. The sex ratio between 2001 and 2011 is a graphic indicator of the erosion in women's status. Although the overall sex ratio improved from 933 to 940 between the two censuses (even though there were several states that saw a downward shift), the sex ratio in the 0–6 age-group population fell from 927 to 914, a quantitative substantiation of the growing incidence of female foeticide through sex pre-selection techniques (http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/data_files/india/s13_sex_ratio.pdf).

Table 8.1 shows that the four southern states fared considerably better than the north, but apart from Tamil Nadu where there was an absolute improvement in the sex ratio in both categories, in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and even Kerala, there was a fall in the sex ratios in the 0–6 age group.

The improvement in the sex ratio in Tamil Nadu could be directly attributed to the Cradle Baby Scheme first introduced by the then chief minister Jayalalithaa in 1992 in Salem district and extended to the districts of Madurai, Theni, Dindigul, and Dharmapuri, all with a high rate of female infanticide. Cradles were placed at key points where unwanted baby girls could be left. As on 31 February 2001, 3,321 baby girls were thus rescued (http://www.tn.gov.in/policynotes/pdf/social_welfare.pdf).

Kerala has traditionally fared well on human development indices owing to its progressive political and cultural milieu and history but, even here, there has been a drop in the 0–6 age-group sex ratio for girls.

In an uncertain economic milieu, the structures of both religion and caste have seen a consolidation around narrow cultural and political identities. Dalit women in all states and across all segments, but particularly in the agricultural sector, are special victims of discriminationof class, caste, and gender—and have been in the forefront of women's and Dalit organizations.

The demand for political representation through 33 per cent reservation for women in Parliament (a demand that women have already won in the state assemblies and panchayat institutions); the battles against the many forms of violence women are subject to—from honour

Table 8.1 Sex Ratio in 2001 and 2011 in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu

	Age group 0 to 6 years			
	2001	2011	2001	2011
Andhra Pradesh	978	992	961	943
Karnataka	965	968	946	943
Kerala	1058	1084	960	959
Tamil Nadu	987	995	942	946

Source: *Census of India 2011*.

killings, rape, domestic violence, the devaluing of women in popular entertainment and culture, communal targeting, and the special discriminations that Dalit women face in urban and rural milieus, to the struggles against anti-women government economic policies—are part of the palette of struggles that Indian women's organizations are conducting on a day-to-day basis. Even as violence and discrimination against women increases, there is reassuring evidence of women speaking out, and acting through their unions and organizations. The multi-faceted Indian women's movement, in its very diversity, commitment, and courage, is an inspiring aspect of the larger democratic movement for change and peace in the country.

8.2.5 Industrial Growth and Agrarian Change

HARUKA YANAGISAWA

Industrial growth after Independence was remarkable. In 1960, 5,843 factories, employing 300,000 workers, were registered in Tamil Nadu. In 1982, this figure had grown to 9,753 factories with 738,000 workers. Cotton mills numbered 83 in 1952–3 and 341 in 1978–9. Sugar mills increased from 5 to 24 between the beginning of the 1950s and 1978–9, and in the same period, registered leather factories increased from 329 to 351 and cement works from 3 to 13.

Over and above the expansion of existing industrial sectors was the development of new industries. The chemical industry was, by the late 1970s, second only to the textile industry in terms of value, producing in particular, basic industrial chemicals and fertilizers. Match factories outnumbered all other factories. Also important were factories that produced synthetic resins, plastics, and synthetic fibres.

The production of machinery, machine tools and parts also saw marked growth. Conspicuous within it were prime movers, boilers, steam-generating plants, and machines for the food and textile industries. Of particular importance to Tamil Nadu's later economic development was the growth of the transportation equipment industry. In 1978–9, it accounted for a little under 10 per cent of the registered sectors in the state. Almost half of the 231 factories produced automobile components. TVS and Simpsons, near Madras, first invested in this industry in the 1950s. Capital investment in major industries, in turn, gave rise to smaller factories in the area producing components and parts. The two major automobile manufacturers were Ashok Leyland and Standard Motors. TVS had branched out to manufacture two-wheelers (MIDS 1988: Chapter 7).

Thus industrial growth in Tamil Nadu from the 1950s was particularly characterized by the development of the production of capital goods and intermediate products, thus creating a linkage between the capital goods and light industrial sectors.

Along with the expansion of enterprises registered under the Factories Act, south India also saw the growth of many small-scale workshops as well as cottage and household industries. According to the 1971 Census, there were in Tamil Nadu 8,000 registered factories, 146,000 unregistered workshops and 123,000 units of household industries. About 60 per cent of the workers in the manufacturing, processing, and servicing establishments were employed either in unregistered workshops or household industries. A large number of them were employed in the handloom industry, followed in importance by food processing, ready-made clothing, and timber and timber products. In textile manufacture, the handloom industry supported the greatest number of workers, but power loom factories, that is, small enterprises housing several automated machines, had increased in number. There was a tendency in Tamil Nadu for industries of a certain type to be concentrated in particular areas. Cotton textiles were mainly produced in Salem (see Figure 8.12) and Coimbatore, textile products such as knitted goods and ready-made clothing primarily in the Coimbatore district, while the main areas for the production of foodstuffs were the Coimbatore and Thanjavur districts, where there were many flour mills (MIDS 1988: Chapter 7).

Among these small-scale industries and other businesses there were a fair number of entrepreneurs originally from farming or handicraft communities. A new breed of capitalists rose among them. In coastal Andhra, agrarian development after the introduction of the 'Green Revolution' led to the growth of rural capitalists among cultivating communities like the Kammas and the Reddys, who began to invest in various kinds of industries in urban areas, including sugar mills, textiles, engineering, and construction. Against this background, a good number of entrepreneurs flourished on industrial frontiers like pharmaceuticals (Upadhya 1988; Damodaran 2008: Chapter 4). Tiruppur in southern Tamil Nadu developed as the biggest producer of cotton knitwear, such as *banians*. The Gounder community, which had its base in the countryside, was central to this industry. Many from the community had migrated from villages to Tiruppur as labourers in the knitting mills, and quite a few of them rose to become proprietors in the industry (Chari 2000). After the 1980s, Tiruppur went on to become India's

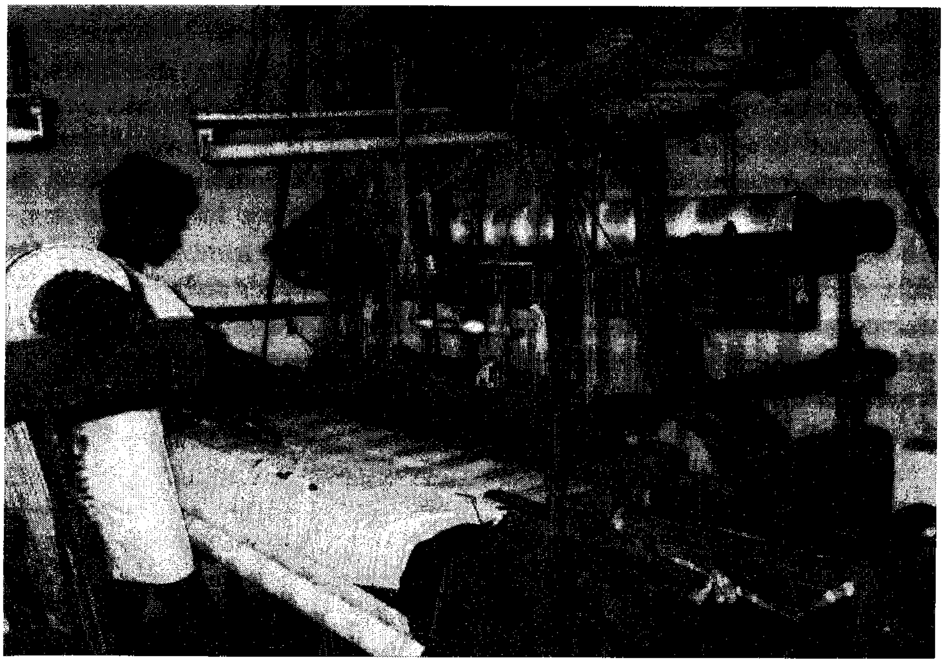

Figure 8.12 Powerloom Factory in Salem
Source: Courtesy of Haruka Yanagisawa.

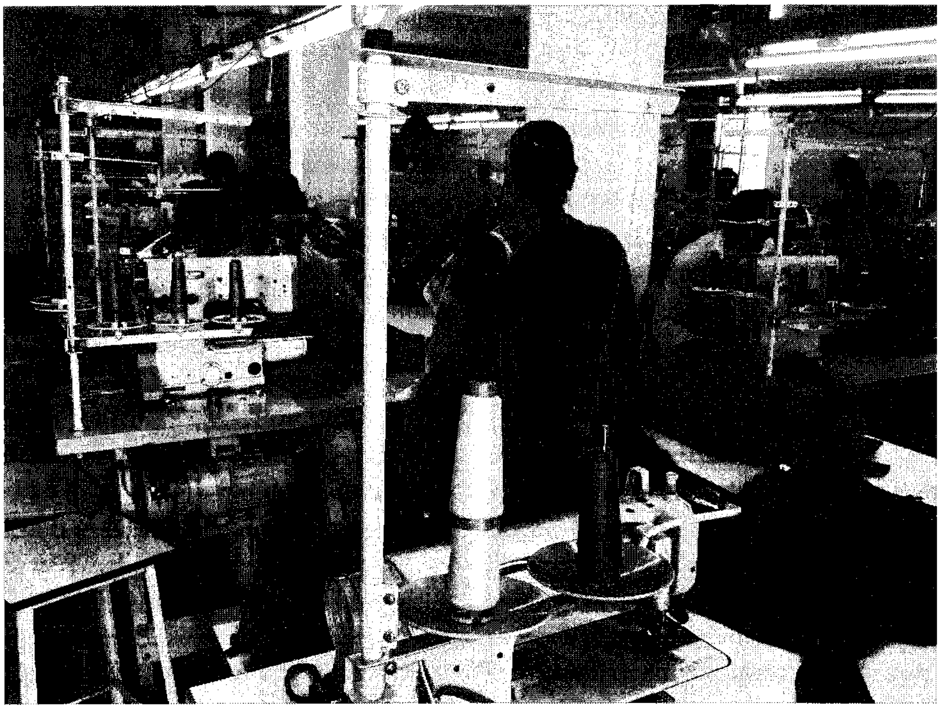

Figure 8.13 Apparel Factory in Tiruppur
Source: Courtesy of Azusa Fujimori.

major producer of cotton knitted products and ready-made clothing (see Figure 8.13). It is interesting that its agrarian origins were a feature in its formative process. Similarly, both the production and distribution of handloom textiles in Madurai, another textile centre in south India, was virtually monopolized by the Sourashtra community. A middle class also emerged from this community, moving beyond the framework of the handloom industry into other businesses (Roy 1997).

As a result of the fall in the price of agricultural products in the 1920s and 1930s, farming in south India continued to stagnate as investments in both fertilizers and wells declined. The recovery of prices from the 1940s, the introduction of the 'Grow More Food Campaign', and an increase in government expenditure on irrigation allowed for considerable expansion of south Indian agriculture after Independence up until the mid-1960s when the so-called Green Revolution started. Between 1950 and 1965, the total land under cultivation in the Tamil districts rose from 14.3 million acres to 17.4 million acres, an increase of 3.1 million acres. Of this, 1.1 million acres was an increase due to double-cropping or more, and 2 million acres, the net area sown.

A number of factors lie behind this increase. First, a considerable amount of previously uncultivated land was brought under cultivation. As the Survey of 1961 for Madras State reports, 'although the total area reported in the revenue records under culturable waste was 2 million acres, a large proportion of it had been brought under cultivation by encroachment by landless labourers or cultivators'; it may be assumed that a very large area of this was wasteland, now being cultivated by the landless classes.[57] Second, a growth in irrigation contributed to an increase in the area cropped, by expanding the net area sown and by extending double-plus cropping. Land irrigated by government canals grew by 74,000 acres, but there was a surge in the lands irrigated by tanks (876,000 acres) and by wells (560,000 acres). The augmentation in the crop area can thus be attributed, on the one hand, to the government increasing its expenditure on irrigation and, on the other, to the people's renewed investment in wells for irrigation, which had remained stagnant for the two decades before Independence.

The yield per unit of area had also increased considerably, even before the Green Revolution. The yield of rice per hectare, measured by crop-cutting experiments, grew from 1,172 kilograms in 1951–2, to 1,439 kilograms in 1959–60 and 1,410 kilograms in 1966–7.[58]

Certainly the increased expenditure on irrigation by the post-Independence government and the Grow More Food Campaign that started in 1942 were important factors in the increase in the area of land cropped and the increase in yield per unit of area. However, there can be no doubt that underlying those policies was the revival of investment by local farmers in fertilizers and in well irrigation.

The Green Revolution of the 1960s introduced and propagated high-yield varieties, increasingly employed fertilizers and insecticides, and expanded irrigation centring on tubewells (see Figure 8.14). Rice yield per hectare rose 50 per cent, from 1,410 kilograms in 1966–7 to 2,140 kilograms in 1984. Cereals other than rice witnessed a decline, while the fortunes of sugarcane and pulses rose.

During the 1950s and 1960s, land reforms proceeded apace. At the centre of the reforms in Madras state were, among others, the protection of tenant farmers from arbitrary eviction, fair land rent, and the protection of tenancy rights through registration.

Another important mainstay of the reforms was setting a ceiling on landholding. As of 1984, of the 204,000 acres of land regarded as surplus under the Land Ceiling Act, 71,000 acres were redistributed, one-third of which went to members of the Scheduled Castes (MIDS 1988: 140–1). The area of land redistributed in Tamil Nadu was no more than 0.5 per cent of cropland in 1984 and it is safe to say that there was almost no transfer of land under the redistribution demanded by the Land Ceiling Act.

Landholding patterns changed in two major ways over the decades, as shown in Table 8.2. First, just over 10 per cent of rural households owned close to half the land in 1961–2, and this unequal distribution had not fundamentally changed even by 1982. Second, the ratio of large landholdings of over four hectares fell, confirming that there was a slight progress towards equality with an increase in the number of small landholders. While the increase in the latter can be partially attributed to division through inheritance, it also represents the purchase of land by previously landless classes and the distribution of wasteland, as well as the proportion acquired by the landless through encroachment on wasteland.

When considering distribution according to caste and community, village surveys report

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[57] Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India, *Report on Location and Utilisation of Wastelands in India, Part VIII-Madras*, Wastelands Survey and Reclamation Committee, Government of India, 1961, p. 5. Of the increase in the net area under cultivation between 1950 and 1965 in Tamil Nadu, about 1 million acres was a decrease in cultivable uncultivated land and the remaining 1 million acres was a decrease in fallow land.

[58] Government of Madras, *Season and Crop Reports* for 1951–2, 1959–60 and 1966–7.

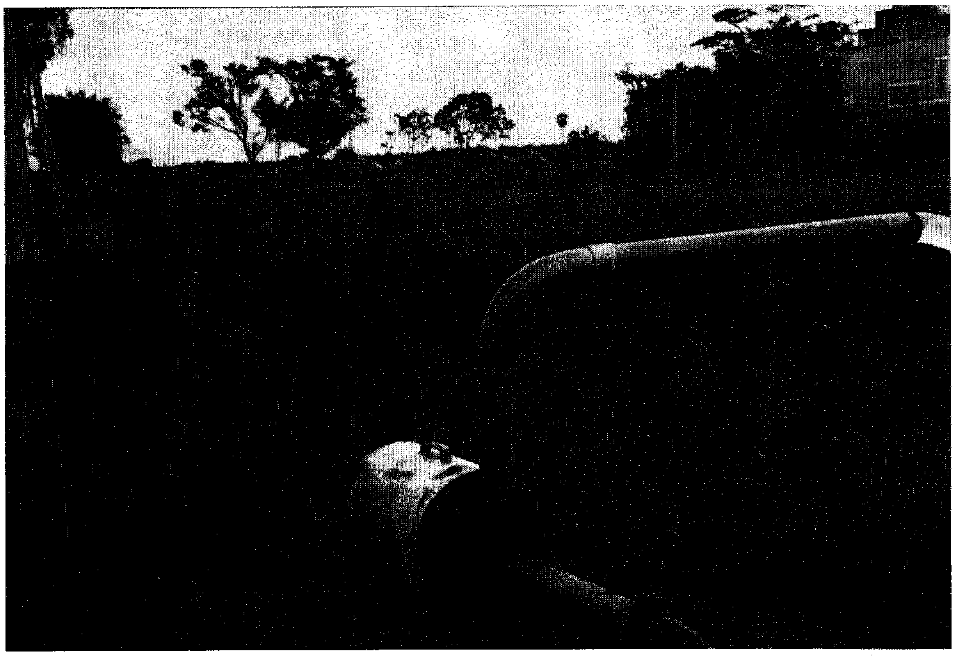

Figure 8.14 Well Irrigation in a Paddy Field
Source: Courtesy of Haruka Yanagisawa.

profoundly interesting changes. In one village, in the paddy lands of Tiruchirappalli district, Brahmins owned 209 acres (half the cultivated land of the village) in 1952 but only 170 acres in 1979 (about 38 per cent of the total). By contrast, the Muthurajas, an 'Other Backward Caste' (OBC), and the Scheduled Castes increased their landholding—the Muthurajas almost threefold, from 23 acres in 1952 to 68 acres in 1979, and the Scheduled Castes from 9.1 acres in 1952 to 16.63 acres in 1979. However, landholding among two 'forward caste' communities in the village, the Pillais and the Chettiars, showed virtually no change (Yanagisawa 1996: 233–4). This kind of movement, from dominant landholding classes to the backward and Scheduled castes, has been seen in quite a few villages.[59]

The decrease in landholding among the dominant castes and its increase among the backward and Scheduled Castes was associated with changes in class relationships in the villages. There had long been a tendency among powerful village landowners, such as Brahmins, to pursue their education and to seek work in urban centres, and this increased after Independence. Brahmin households in rural areas gradually moved to the cities, where their children received tertiary education and took employment as senior civil servants and as officers or engineers in public and private enterprises, and other white-collar jobs. Their lives were no longer based in the

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[59] V. B. Athreya, *Gangaikondan 1916–1984: Change and Stability*, Working Paper No. 56, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Madras, 1985; S. Guhan and K. Bharathan, *Dusi: A Resurvey*, Working Paper No. 52, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Madras, 1984; Athreya et al. 1990: 110; Janakarajan 1993; Ramachandran 1990: 232.

Table 8.2 Percentage Distribution of Households and Areas Owned for the Years 1961–2 and 1982 in Tamil Nadu

	Marginal (less than 1.01 ha)		Small (1.01–2.02 ha)		(2.03–4.05 ha)		Medium (4.05–10.12 ha)		Large (10.13 ha and above)		All households	
	Household	Area owned	Household	Area owned	Household	Area owned	Household	Area owned	Household	Area owned	Household	Area owned
1961–2	78.42	19.99	11.07	21.67	7.23	27.04	2.90	22.95	0.38	8.35	100	100
1982	81.85	23.57	10.89	27.24	4.95	23.53	2.16	20.94	0.16	4.71	100	100

Sources: MIPS 1988, Table 6 (p. 142).

villages. In their place, certain members of the backward castes rose as owner-farmers. They had formerly been tenant farmers but their landholdings gradually grew, and some of them acquired large-scale farms.

Agricultural workers from the Scheduled Castes, the lowest class in village society, provided the bulk of casual labour. From the end of the nineteenth century, they began to move towards autonomy from the dominant landowning classes and following Independence this tendency increased.[60] Within the agricultural labourer classes some acquired small plots or obtained cultivation rights on tenant farmland. Their chances of finding work outside the farming sector also increased, and this further strengthened their sense of autonomy. The number of permanent farm servants, who had maintained a long-term working relationship with a single farmer, decreased sharply, while day labourers increased (Gough 1989: 296, 525).

Since the 1970s, it is clear that there has been an increase in the availability of non-farming work outside the village. Such work is

Table 8.3 Ownership of Consumer Durables in a village in Tiruchirappalli District

	Number of consumer durables per 100 households		
	Ward No. 1	Ward No. 2	Ward No. 3
TV set	67	64	54
Cable TV	62	53	51
Radio	72	50	41
Bicycle	67	61	28
Table fan	41	35	27
Ceiling fan	109	106	78
Refrigerator	12	5	2
Gas cooker	72	27	68
Telephone (house)	10	9	2
Telephone (cell)	78	59	43
Motorbike	29	24	15

Source: Data collected in the course of the author's fieldwork conducted in 2007.

Notes:

Ward No. 1: Main inhabitants are Pillais and Chettiars

Ward No. 2: Main inhabitants are Muthurajas.

Ward No. 3: Main inhabitants are SC members.

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[60] There were certain areas also which received support from the Dravidian movement and the Communist Party (Gough 1989: 320).

extremely diverse and includes brickmaking, repairing farming implements, labouring on building sites, dealing in straw, working in match factories, *bidi*-rolling, tailoring, and so on. With the expansion of non-agricultural work, the market for lower-class labour in rural areas has grown tight and, as a result, the wages of farm workers have risen considerably. A survey of villages in North Arcot district of Tamil Nadu shows that in the twenty years between 1973–4 and 1993–4, the index (1973–4 =100) of real casual wage rates of male farm labourers grew to between 118 and 625, and of women between 116 and 329. The survey also reveals that average real expenditure has increased by a factor of 2.8 for landless agricultural labourers (Harris-Whit and Janakarajan 2004: 35, 37).

Changes in the rural economy have bee even more marked since the 1990s. There ha been a further increase in non-agricultural wor among those residing in villages. There has als been a migration of agricultural labourers t towns. The permeation of consumer durable in the lives of those living in villages is striking

The increase in employment opportunitie and rising wages commanded by agricultura labourers have made it difficult to guarantee stable and cheap labour force. This has furthe prompted the elite population of the villages t opt out of agriculture, and led farmers to rel more on their own family labour and to leav

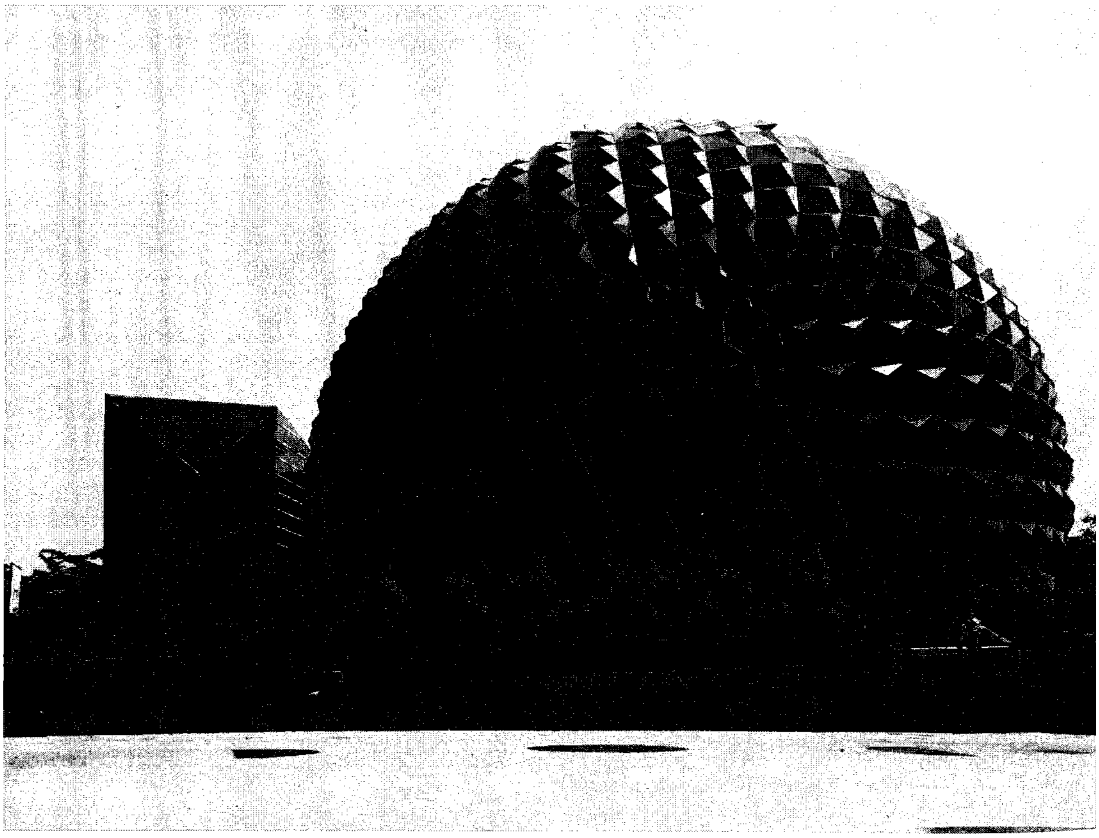

Figure 8.15 Buildings at the Infosys Training Centre in Mysore
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

part of their land fallow or plant trees on it (Djurfeldt et al. 2008; Vaidyanathan 2011: 75; Yanagisawa 2008). Further research is needed to ascertain how general these trends are.

The growth of the IT industry has seen a large number of the upper castes, especially young Brahmins, who form a large percentage of IT professionals and software engineers, being employed by leading companies in Chennai, thus forming the industry's core human resources (Fuller and Narasimhan 2008) (see Figure 8.15).

The growth of small industries in south India provided the background for Tiruppur's knitted textile and ready-wear industry, which has been connected with the export market since the 1980s. It now has become India's largest export centre for ready-made clothing. Many migrant workers from rural districts in south India as well as from other regions in India work in Tiruppur's factories.

Similarly, the growth of the vehicle parts and other industries in Tamil Nadu since Independence has led to South India's continuing growth as an important industrial hub (see Figure 8.16).

While the IT industry, an export-oriented textile industry, and multinational corporations are located in many areas of India, south India is particularly favourable to them, not least because its socio-economic history provides a base of personnel and production to support them.

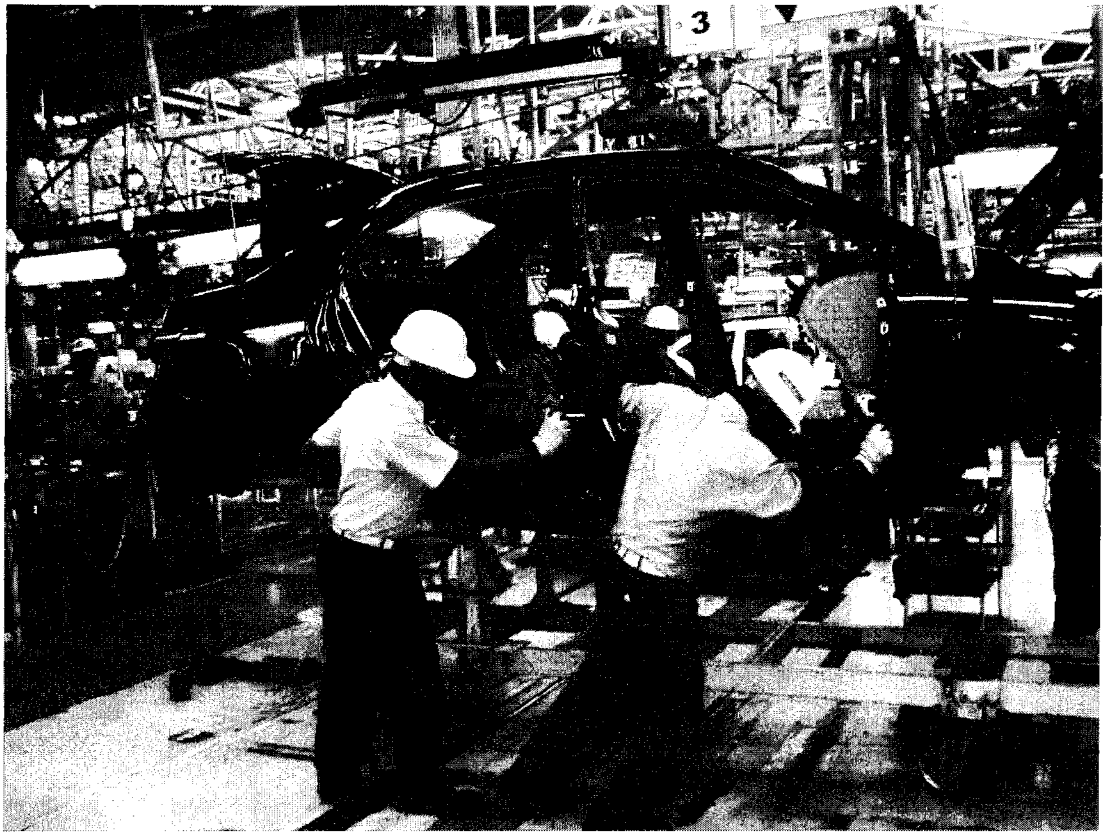

Figure 8.16 Toyota Kirloskar Motor Factory near Bangalore
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

8.2.6 Cinema and Television

TAKAKO INOUE

The first film screened in India was as early as 1896, six months after the first public screening by the Lumière Brothers in Paris. Production in India also began soon thereafter. From the first Indian feature film made by D. G. Phalke in 1912 till the end of the 1980s before the satellite TV era, cinema continued to be a primary entertainment media in India. In Madras, regular screening began in 1900. The first Tamil film *Kīchakavādham*, a story from the *Mahābhārata*, was produced by R. Nataraja Mudaliar (1885–1972), who established the India Film Company Limited in 1916. In the initial phase of the silent movies era in south India, film production was heavily influenced by traditional theatrical performances where mythological themes dominated.

With the advent of the Tamil talkie in the 1930s, the situation changed considerably. There was a great demand for singing actors, song-writers, and orchestra groups. In addition, many stage actors and set-artistes were recruited from drama companies. Initially, for almost four years, Tamil talkies were produced in Bombay.[61] The first Tamil talkie produced in Madras was *Srinivasa Kalyanam* (1934) in a studio called Srinivasa Cinetone set up by A. Narayanan (1900–39), one of the pioneers.The conventional musical style of Indian cinema has been shaped by the ancient epics, Sanskrit drama, folk and Parsi theatre, and Hollywood musicals, all comprising song, dance, and drama. Due to a paucity of good singing actors and actresses, playback singers came to be introduced after Independence. A majority of Indian films include several songs prerecorded by playback singers. Lata Mangeshkar and her sister Asha Bhosle are two of the best-known in India. S. Janaki (b. 1938), K. J. Yesudas (b. 1940), S. P. Balasubramaniam (b. 1946), and K. S. Chitra (b. 1963) are all well-known playback singers in south Indian films.

During the 1930s and 1940s, many song-writers and actors, sympathizing with the freedom struggle led by Mahatma Gandhi, supported the Congress. Narayanan began to propagate the nationalistic idea through his films despite film censorship. S. Satyamurthy (1887–1943), a politician belonging to the Congress and also an amateur stage actor, realized the potential of cinema and used it as a powerful media for political propaganda. Since then, Tamil cinema has rapidly been politicized.

It was in the 1950s that the relationship between cinema and politics substantially strengthened in Tamil Nadu. Two DMK leaders, C. N. Annadurai (1909–69) and M. Karunanidhi (b. 1924), glorified the Dravidian movement through their scriptwriting. The first DMK film, whose script was written by Karunanidhi, was *Manthiri Kumari* (1951). M. G. Ramachandran (MGR) (1917–87) was the protagonist in this film. Although he started out as a Congressman, he became a member of the DMK in 1953. As MGR gradually succeeded in creating his self-image as a good son and a protector of the weak, members of his fan club turned out for his political rallies. As a result, both the DMK and Tamil cinema acquired a mass base. Due to differences with Karunanidhi, MGR seceded from the DMK and formed a new party ADMK (later renamed AIADMK) in 1972, He went on to become chief minister of Tamil Nadu in 1977 and remained in office till his death in 1987. Today, television is also a prop of political propaganda for both DMK and AIADMK, the two major Dravidian parties. Sun TV network run by Karunanidhi's family is the largest TV network in Asia while Jaya TV was founded by Jayalalithaa (b. 1948) a popular actress who became the leader of the AIADMK.

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[61] The first Tamil talkie, *Kalidasa* (1931), was produced in Bombay.

Unlike Bollywood's Hindi cinema, Tamil cinema remained local till the 1980s. Mani Ratnam (b. 1956), a leading director, is credited with having revolutionized the Tamil film industry and altering the profile of Indian cinema through his successful 'Terrorism trilogy': *Roja* (1992), *Bombay* (1995), and *Dil Se* (1998). He hired A. R. Rahman (b. 1967) as music director for *Roja* and the music for this film brought the latter immense fame. Thereafter, Rahman continued and enjoyed collaborating with Mani Ratnam, and most of their films were not only hits, but also won international acclaim. Besides working in the film industry, Rahman has also been involved in several non-film music projects such as *Vande Mataram*, an album he brought out in 1997 to celebrate fifty years of India's Independence. For this, he composed the music for songs written and sung in various languages spoken in India: English, Hindi, Urdu, and Sanskrit, besides his mother tongue, Tamil. Because of his syncretic style of integrating Carnatic and Western elements with electronic sounds and setting them to lyrics in diverse languages, his music reaches a global audience beyond cultural barriers and national borders.[62]

In terms of the number of films produced annually, the Telugu film industry is the largest in south India and stands either first (ex. 2006) or second in India competing closely with the Hindi film industry. It also holds the Guinness World Record for the largest film production facility in the world. In fact, there are a number of Guinness Record holders in the Telugu film industry. D. Rama Naidu (b. 1936) holds the record for being the most prolific producer with 130 films; Brahmanandam (b. 1956), for acting in the greatest number of films in a single language; S. P. Balasubramaniam, for having sung the greatest number of songs; and Vijaya Nirmala (b. 1946), for female director with the highest number of films.

The combination of cinema and politics, similar to the trend in Tamil Nadu, can also be observed in Andhra Pradesh, where N. T. Rama Rao (NTR) (1923–96), a film actor, director, producer, and politician, founded the Telugu Desam Party in 1982. Overlapping his image with Hindu deities, such as Lord Rama in *Lava Kusha* (1963) and Lord Krishna in *Mayabazaar* (1957), he quickly secured mass recognition. He became chief minister of Andhra Pradesh in 1983 and was reelected thrice. After his demise, his family continues to be active in both cinema and politics. It is worth mentioning that the Telugu film industry whose base was in Madras till the 1980s completely shifted to Hyderabad during the period of NTR's political pre-eminence.

Though the Kannada and Malayalam film industries are comparatively smaller than the Tamil and Telugu film industries, a new wave in Indian cinema commonly known as 'parallel cinema' or 'art cinema', in these smaller film industries has produced several famous personalities. Parallel cinema as an alternative to commercial cinema, is known for its serious sociopolitical content using realism and naturalism to tell stories. The movement was started in the 1950s by filmmakers in West Bengal such as Satyajit Ray (1921–92) and afterwards extended to other states in the 1970s and the 1980s. B. V. Karanth's *Chomana Dudi* (1975), a film on caste distinctions, Girish Karnad's *Kaadu* (1973), and Girish Kasaravalli's *Ghatashraddha* (1977) were masterpieces of Kannada parallel cinema. In Kerala, Adoor Gopalakrishnan (b. 1941), who is regarded as Satyajit Ray's spiritual heir, came to prominence with his very first film, *Swayamvaram* (1972). G. Aravindan (1935–91) followed in Adoor's footsteps with his *Uttarayanam* (1974) and Shaji N. Karun (b. 1952) as a cinematographer worked with Aravindan for *Thampu* (1979).

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[62] In 2009, for his musical score for *Slumdog Millionaire*, Rahman won the Broadcast Film Critics Association Award, the Golden Globe Award for Best Original Score, the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Award for Best Film Music, and two 'Oscars'—for Best Original Music Score and Best Original Song—presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences at its 81st ceremony.

Film viewing at a cinema hall was an occasional event that gave people a chance to enjoy themselves by sharing a specific public space, while listening to music on the radio or on cassette players was a part of private everyday life Since 1991, with the arrival of Star TV in India satellite channels have increased tremendously and television, by bringing in outside events has removed the wall between the private and the public and in the process changed the relationship between them (Inoue 2001). The Indian film industry has been forced to compete with increasing movie channels and broadcasting rights of feature films are sometimes sold within a short while of their release. The rising number of multiplexes since the mid-1990s i one of the strategies for dealing with such competition (see Figure 8.17). It has changed the

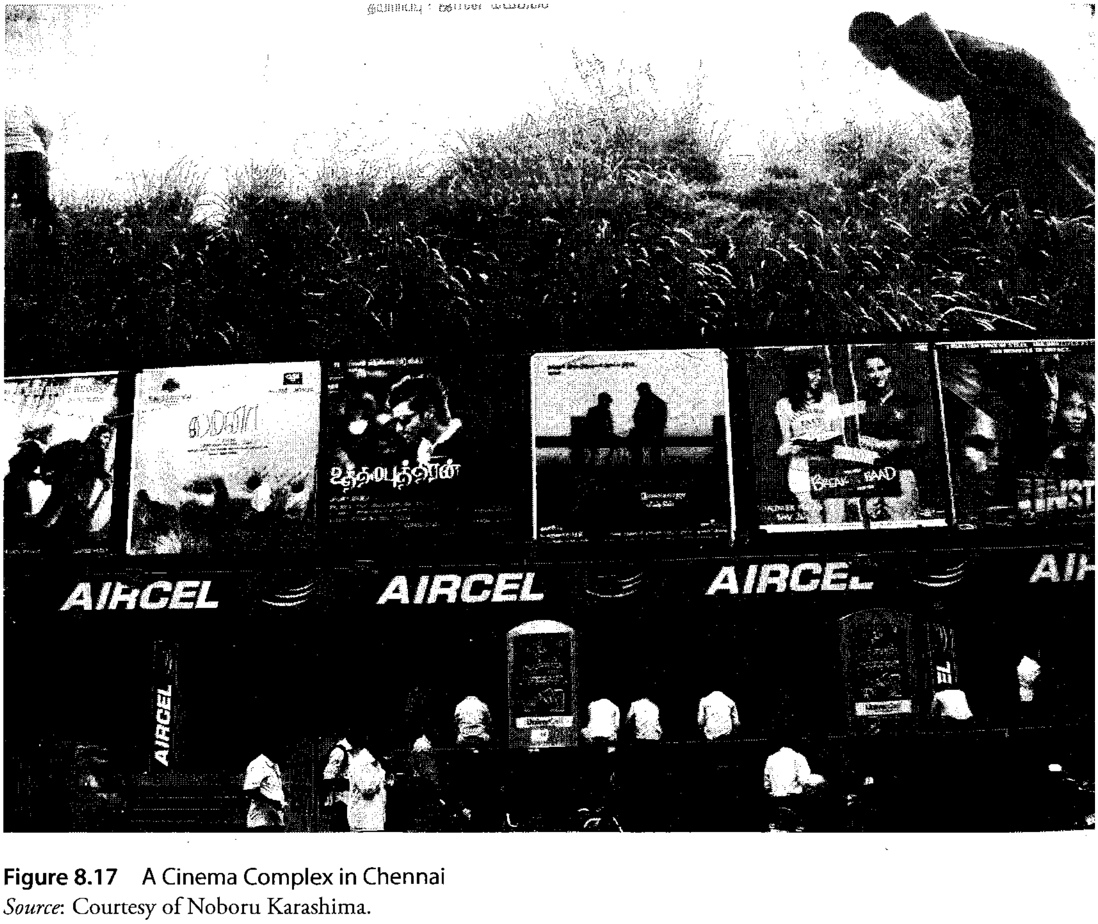

Figure 8.17 A Cinema Complex in Chennai
Source: Courtesy of Noboru Karashima.

revenue system of the Indian film industry and affected viewers' behavioural patterns as well. India's first multiplex was the Maris Complex with five screens, which opened in the 1980s in Tiruchirappalli; the largest in the country is Mayajaal in Chennai with fourteen screens.

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EPILOGUE

Southern Spice

Seasoning the National Cuisine

NOBORU KARASHIMA

In 1988, Arjun Appadurai published an article on the making of an Indian national cuisine as evident from the appearance of many cookbooks in the 1970s and 1980s. He wrote, 'The last two decades have witnessed in India an extremely significant increase in the number of printed cookbooks pertaining to Indian food written in English and directed at an Anglophone readership' (Appadurai 1988). The argument is that Indian culinary traditions are largely regional and ethnic, as the cooking is embedded in moral and medical beliefs and prescriptions, but that the recent emergence of the urban middle class due to economic growth has freed them from such restrictions and led to the creation of a national cuisine overarching and cross-cutting their differences.

More recently, the ever-widening culinary habits of people are better reflected by the overflowing variety of specially mixed curry powders and pre-cooked retort pouches, such as *sambar* powder, *garam masala*, instant *idli*, chicken *biryani*, pork *vindaloo*, and so on, in food shops (see Figure E.1). This was made possible by further growth in the economy, which brought many shopping malls to even small towns, as well as on account of technological development in producing retort food. If we examine the contents of these preparations there is no doubt that among the most important elements they contain are spices for curry, the use of which originated in south India. Accordingly, if we follow Appadurai's line of reasoning, we may be able to say that south India has contributed greatly to the establishment of the Indian national cuisine.

Linschoten, the Dutch traveller who stayed in Goa in the sixteenth century in the service of the Portuguese Archbishop, writes in his travel journals about local meals and eating etiquette: 'Most of their fish is eaten with rice, which they seeth in broth, which they put upon the rice, and is somewhat soure, as if it were sodden in gooseberries, or unripe grapes, but it tasteth well, and is called Carriel,[1] which is their daily meat' (Yule and Burnell 1886/1968: 282). This might well be a description of a fish

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[1] It may well be certain that the word curry derives from either the Kannada *kaṟi* or Tamil/Malayalam *kaṟi* that was also used by the Portuguese in Goa to mean local food. It is not clear, however, why *kaṟi*, which means pepper, vegetable, or meat (*Tamil Lexicon*) was adopted as a general name for meals. *Kaṟi* appears in the *Sangam* poems, with pepper as the meaning.

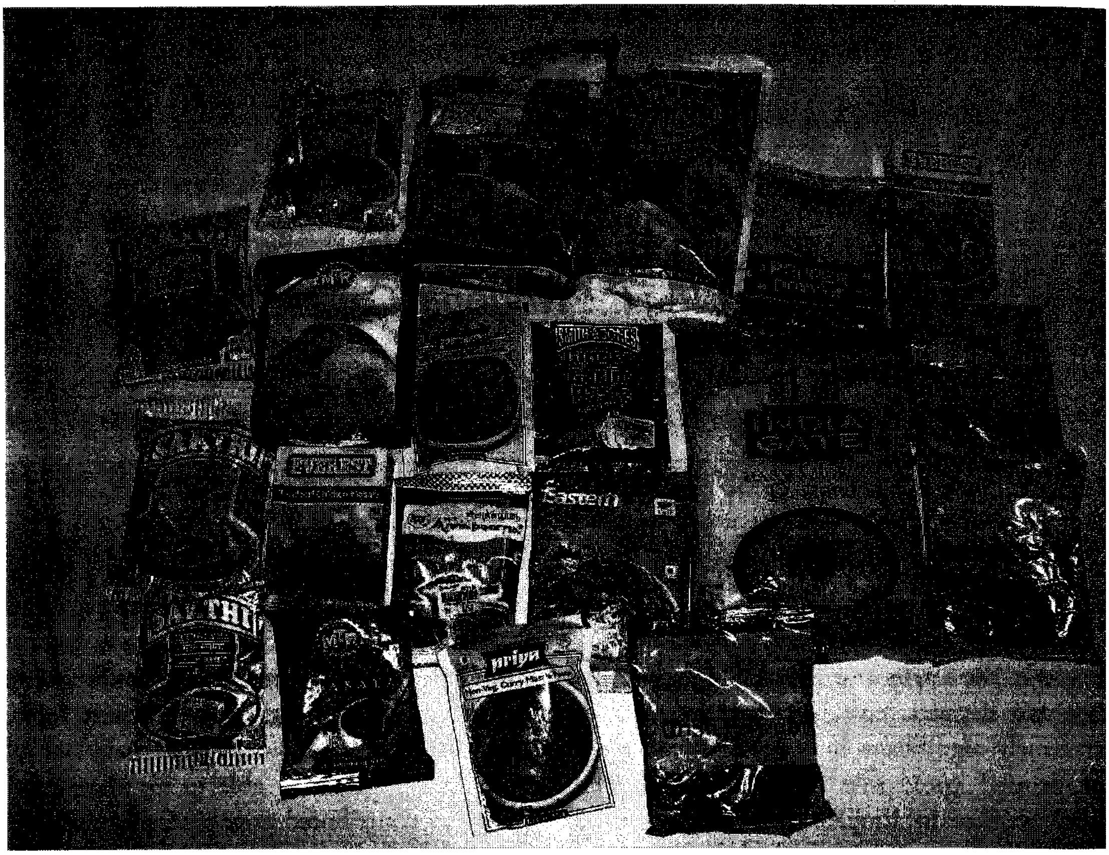

Figure E.1 Curry Powders and Pre-cooked Retort Pouches
Source: Courtesy of Takako Karashima.

curry (*kuḻambu*) and the way it is eaten in the present-day south India. In which case, the question is, how far back in Indian culinary history can we trace the making of the spice-based curry? A lot of spices, including turmeric, cumin, mustard, pepper, and coriander are used not only in the curry that Linschoten describes but also in many other curry preparations even today, and the sour taste comes from tamarind.

In the Buddhist *Jātakas*, we come across a story in which Sujata, a village maiden, presents Buddha with food when he descends from the hill where he has performed ascetic practices. The food was milk gruel (*pāyasa*) and there is nothing in the *Jātakas* that reminds us of curry, although *ōdana*, another milk gruel similar to *pāyasa*, appears. Xuanzang (Hsüan-tsang; Yuan Chwang), a Chinese monk who stayed at Nalanda monastery in the seventh century to study Buddhism, listed the various Indian foods that he was aware of as follows: 'Curd, ghee, granulated sugar, sugar-candy, cakes and parched grain with mustard-seed oil are the common food; and fish, mutton, venison are occasional dainties' (Watters 1905: vol. I, 178). Another Chinese monk, Yìjìng (I Ching; I-Tsing), who studied in the same monastery forty years after Xuanzang, also states that *ghee* and curd are taken by the people everywhere. Xuanzang makes other observations such as people eating from one vessel in which all the food items are mixed; the most conspicuous that he and Yìjìng describe in their writings are 'milk' products, which are also described in the *Jātaka*s written before the Common Era We may presume, therefore, that milk products are the most important food item characterizing the culinary tradition in the Gangetic plain, or the northern part of the Indian sub-continent. Milk has great importance in the traditional cuisine of Nepal and Tibet as well, and the Tibetans even drink yak-butter tea.

In contrast, it is spice-based curry that characterizes south Indian food. We have already seen in Chapter 2 that Roman ships frequently visited Muziris and other Malabar ports to purchase pepper and other spices. Ginger, cardamom, and turmeric were also produced in the southern part of the peninsula. To these ports, cinnamon was brought from Sri Lanka and clove from the Moluccas Islands. Some south Indian medieval inscriptions also record ingredients to be used in food offered to temple deities. Two ninth-century inscriptions of Tiruchchendur (*SII*, xiv, 16A) and Ambasamudram (*EI*, ix, 10), both in Tirunelveli District prescribe that for making the *kūṭṭu* to be offered to the deity, *kāyam*, an ingredient comprising pepper, turmeric, coriander, mustard, and cumin, be used. These are the commonly used spices even today in most curries in south India. We can say, therefore, that the prototype of present-day curry preparation was already established in south India at the latest by the ninth century.

Looking at the various ingredients used to prepare food in India today nobody will object to our saying that curry and milk are two of the most important elements in the Indian cuisine. And from what we have seen above, we may say that milk comes from the north Indian or more broadly speaking from the west/central Asian nomadic tradition, while curry developed in south India where many spices grow and were brought from Southeast Asia and West Asia through maritime trade carried out in the Indian Ocean. Of course, the people of south India had known milk from a very remote past, since the Dravidians were also originally pastoral.[2] In the Sangam literature a herder community appears as *āyar*. In cookery, however, milk was given more importance in north India. According to Bh. Krishnamurti, an authority in Dravidian linguistics, among Indian snacks anything sweet made using milk has names that originated from the Aryan languages and anything savoury from the Dravidian languages.[3] This seems to verify the above presumption that in the Indian culinary tradition, milk belongs to north and curry to south India (see Figures E.2 and E.3).

These two distinct culinary traditions, however, merged and were combined through the long course of history. As we have already seen in previous chapters, the north Indian cultural tradition, for example Brahmanism and Hinduism, spread to various other parts of the Indian subcontinent and even beyond to Southeast Asian countries. The process started from before the common era and gathered momentum during the medieval period. In the area of cuisine also, the Ambasamudram inscription referred to above mentions 'curd' in addition to *kāyam* to make *kūṭṭu*, showing the importance of milk in temple rituals in south India too. An inscription (*SITI*, 406) of Achutadevaraya, a sixteenth-century Vijayanagar king, refers to

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[2] As stated in section 1.1, south Indian Neolithic sites yield cattle bones and reveal ash mounds (heaps of cattle dung).

[3] The information was given by personal communication.

Figure E.2 Murukku (South Indian Snack)
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

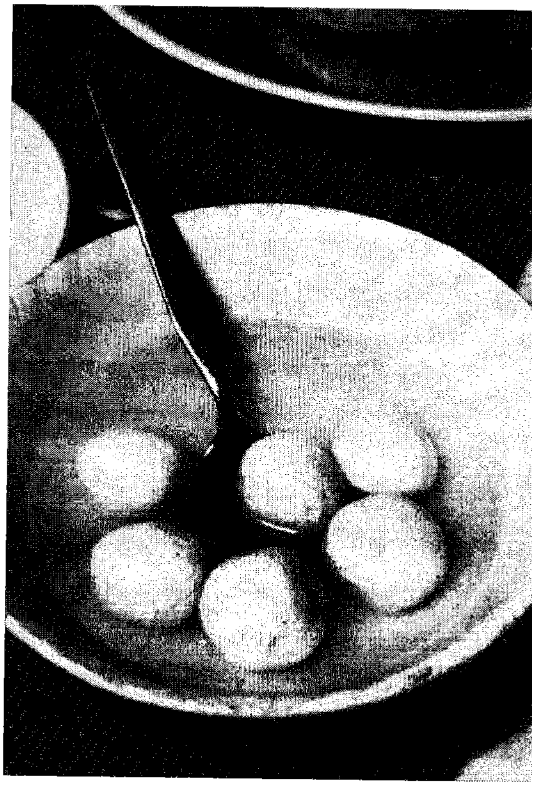

Figure E.3 Rasgulla (North Indian Snack)
Source: Courtesy of Tsugusato Omura.

'curd rice' as one of the meals to be offered to the deities of Varadaraja and Ekambharanatha temples in Kanchipuram. The curd rice is described as made of specified quantities of rice, curd, ghee, pepper, turmeric, and cardamom. This reveals a fine mix of milk and spices.

Just as the Krishna and Rama *bhakti* that developed in north India in and after the fourteenth century following the tradition of the *ālvārs* and Ramanuja was an example of south Indian cultural influence on north India, likewise, in the culinary field also we see south Indian influence on north India. An example is the use of various spices in preparing local dishes in the north. Sebastian Manrique, an Italian missionary who visited the Mughal Empire during the reign of Shah Jahan, describes in his travels that the *khichari* (rice cooked with lentils), which the Bengalis ate at their feasts, was flavoured with ingredients such as almonds, raisins, cloves, mace, nutmeg, cardamom, cinnamon, and pepper (Collingham 2006: 33). Court recipes given in the *Ain-i Akbari* furnish information about the *kebabs* at Akbar's court. The preparation requires ginger, cumin, pepper, coriander, cardamom, and clove for flavour (Phillott 1927: 63). *Pilau* in Persia seems to have been a delicately flavoured rice preparation using good quality rice and meat marinated in curd before cooking for a long time. *Pilau*, coloured by saffron and flavoured with asafoetida while being cooked, became *biryani,* which had a pungent and strong taste due to the mixture of various spices once it was introduced to the Mughal court. (Collingham 2006: 27). By the Mughal period the use of a variety of spices for preparing most dishes was well established in north India too,[4] thus making 'milk' and 'curry' two of the most important and indispensable elements that characterize Indian cuisine.

Of course, we cannot call this medieval Indian cuisine characterized by the use of milk and curry 'national' cuisine—people were still deeply bound by many restrictions in culinary custom deriving from their regional, ethnic, and religious differences—however, it certainly was a prototype 'Indian' cuisine. It became the national cuisine only recently, when economic growth produced the middle class and liberated them from the traditional culinary restrictions in both urban and rural areas. *Chapatis* and *nans,* staple north Indian food made from wheat, are now commonly eaten in south India and, on the other hand, *waḍais* and *dōsais,* typical south Indian preparations, have become popular in restaurants in north Indian towns.

Although people's willingness, and even eagerness, to try out food that is not traditional to them has certainly increased these days in the process of the establishment of a national cuisine, as pointed out by Appadurai, 'the national cuisine does not seek to hide its regional or ethnic roots'. On the contrary, the individual identity of each of these dishes, which are different regionally, ethnically and religiously, is well retained and strengthened. Despite this there has emerged a cuisine overarching and cross-cutting the aforesaid traditional differences and their individuality.[5] This integration was made possible by the common use of milk and spices in most of these different individual dishes. Their use spread over the subcontinent through the long process of cultural interaction between the north and the south. Thus, curry united not only south India but also India as a whole.

[4] Pepper must have been used in north Indian cuisine quite early, as it (long pepper) grew in north India too. The English word pepper derives originally from its Sanskrit name *pippali* through Greek and Latin. *Pippali* entered into Greek as *piperi,* probably in the middle of the first millennium BCE, through Macedonian contact. Though the Roman Empire imported pepper mostly from south India, its Tamil name, *miḷagu,* came to be known to the English only in the eighteenth century as *mulligatawny* (*miḷagu-taṇṇīr*) soup.

[5] This phenomenon, a simultaneous occurrence of diversification and unification, called the 'twin process' by Appadurai, in other words, unity in diversity, is considered an important feature of Indian civilization.

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